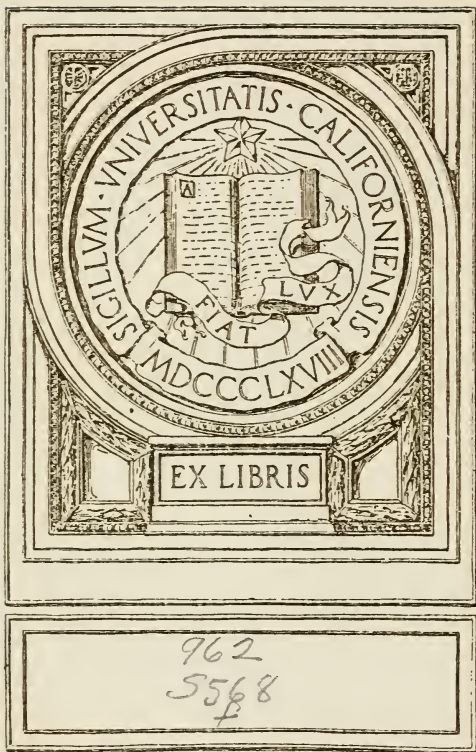



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TO
VARIOUS TALENTED COMEDIANS
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Four Plays for Children:

The Rose and the Ring

The Goody-Witch

The Goosegirl

Boots and the North Wind

BY

ETHEL SIDGWICK

Red

AUTHOR OF

'PROMISE,' 'HERSELF,' ETC.



LONDON

SIDGWICK & JACKSON, LIMITED

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NOTES ON THE MUSIC FOR 'Four Plays for Children'

BY

ETHEL SIDGWICK

THE GOODY-WITCH

THE GOOSEGIRL

BOOTS AND THE NORTH WIND

THE airs to which the songs in these plays are intended to be sung can be found in the song-books named below. Many of the airs are well known, and occur in many collections of English Songs besides those indicated in the subjoined list, which have been chosen as those most likely to be found in School Libraries.

It may be pointed out, however, that some of the songs can be easily adapted to other tunes of similar metre.

LIST OF SONG-BOOKS

- S.B.I.** *Songs of the British Islands.* W. H. Hadow. 1903. (Curwen & Sons, Ltd.)
- E.F.S.** *English Folk-Songs for Schools.* S. Baring Gould and C. J. Sharp. (Curwen & Sons, Ltd.)
- N.S.B.** *National Song Book.* (Boosey & Co.)
- O.E.D.** *Old English Ditties.* Selected from Chappell's 'Popular Music of the Olden Time.' (Chappell & Co.)
- S.F.N.** *Songs of the Four Nations.* Edited by Harold Boulton; music arranged by Arthur Somervell. 1892. (Cramer & Co.)
- S.N.** *Songs of the North.* Edited by A. C. Macleod and Harold Boulton; music arranged by Malcolm Lawson. Vol. I., 1885; Vol. II., 1895. (Cramer & Co.)
- U.S.B.** *University Song Book.* 1901.
- Gaud.** *Gaudeamus.* John Farmer. 1890. (Cassell & Co.)
- S.S.S.B.** *Scottish Students' Song-Book.* 1897. (Bayley & Ferguson.)

SONGS IN 'THE GOODY-WITCH'

Cold Blows the Wind	.	.	.	E.F.S.
Madam, will you walk? (or, The Keys of Heaven)	.	.	.	U.S.B.
Lass of Richmond Hill	.			S.B.I., or N.S.B.
Bow Down	.	.	.	S.B.I.
What are little Boys made of?				(<i>Nursery rhyme</i>)
New Wells	.	.		O.E.D., Vol. I., or S.B.I.
Marjorie Daw	.	.		(<i>Nursery rhyme</i>)
Gossip Joan	.	.		O.E.D., Vol. II., or N.S.B.

SONGS IN 'THE GOOSEGIRL'

It was a Maid, as 'Dargason' in <i>English Country Dances</i> . (Curwen.)				
Over the sea to Skye	.	.	.	S.N.
Kitty Bawn	.			<i>C. V. Stanford's 'Irish Songs'</i>
Lady Greensleeves	.	.		O.E.D., Vol. II.
Scots wha hae	.	.		S.S.S.B., or N.S.B.
The Harp that once	.	.		Gaud., or N.S.B.
Oft in the Stilly Night	.			Gaud., or S.S.S.B.
Felton's Gavotte (or, Farewell, Manchester)				S.B.I., or N.S.B.

SONGS IN

'BOOTS AND THE NORTH

WIND'

Blow away the Morning Dew . . . E.F.S.

Panp., O.E.D., Vol. I.

The Lincolnshire Poacher (or, The Season of
the Year) U.S.B., S.B.I., O.E.D.,

The North Country Lass (or, The Oak and
the Ash) U.S.B., S.B.I.,

Once I loved a Maiden fair U.S.B., O.E.D., Vol. I.

Trelawny (or, The Song of the Western Men)
U.S.B., S.B.I.

Begone, dull Care S.B.I., N.S.B.

The Leather Bottel . S.B.I., O.E.D., Vol. I.

THE
ROSE AND THE RING.

THE ROSE AND THE RING.

NOTE.

Valoroso must have a false nose ; see picture on page 30.

Bulbo should have *two* wigs, one of loose tow, which he can tear out and strew upon the stage in Act I. Scene v.

The Lions are called 'little boys dressed up in door-mats,' and therefore should be obviously nothing else.

The only scenic difficulty is with the Knocker. The simplest way to manage this is to have ready prepared a lightly-stuffed dummy shape, fastened down to a flat pasteboard foundation. It should resemble the porter Gruffanuff, and be contorted into Knocker-form (see the illustration from Thackeray).



It might have a mask or a painted face made grotesquely to resemble his ; but, above all, the resemblance must be driven home, otherwise the audience may miss the point of the transformation. The editor advises conspicuous braiding and epaulettes made of tinsel trimming on the uniform of the real *and* the sham Gruffanuff ; also a red nose, etc., according to taste. To make the Knocker 'brazen,' as in Thackeray, is more difficult, and really less comical.

This Knocker, suspended by its hands to a brass or gilt rod, should be flung over the top of the screen representing the hall-door, at the instant when Gruffanuff staggers behind it gasping to be 'let down.' The fairy should then tap it solemnly on the nose three times, to make all clear. The re-transformation to the human in the last scene is accomplished in the same way.

CHARACTERS.

VALOROSO, *King of Paflagonia.*

THE QUEEN, *his wife.*

THE PRINCESS ANGELICA, *his daughter.*

PRINCE GIGLIO, *his nephew, and rightful King of
Paflagonia.*

BETSINDA (ROSALBA), *maid to the Princess.*

GRUFFANUFF, *the palace porter.*

THE COUNTESS GRUFFANUFF, *his wife.*

PRINCE BULBO, *of Crim-Tartary.*

KING PADELLA, *his father.*

HEDZOFF, *Captain of the Guard.*

GLUMBOSO, *Chancellor of Paflagonia.*

THE ARCHBISHOP *of Paflagonia.*

LORENZO, *Court Painter to Bulbo and Angelica.*

JOHN AND JACKY, *Pages of the Court.*

JONES, *an undergraduate of Bosforo University.*

THE FAIRY BLACKSTICK.

The Crowd, the Lions, the Army, etc.

*Applications for permission to perform
should be made to the Publishers.*

THE ROSE AND THE RING

ACT I. *At the Court of Paslagonia.*

SCENE I. *In Front of the Palace. The Hall Door at back*

Enter F. BLACKSTICK.

F. Black. Really, I do believe that no work is so thankless as that of a Fairy: I begin to think of giving it up altogether. What good am I doing by sending this Princess to sleep for a hundred years?—by causing diamonds and pearls to drop from one little girl's mouth and vipers and toads from another's? I might as well shut my incantations up, and allow things to take their natural course. And then those to whom I have given priceless gifts are so ungrateful, they actually patronise me—*me*, the Fairy Blackstick, who could turn them into baboons and their diamonds into strings of onions by a single wave of my wand. And the gifts themselves are misused and come to no good. There are my Magic Rose and Ring, which had the power of making all the world in love with the possessor. Prince Bulbo of Crim-Tartary, who has the Rose now, is little better than a fool; and as for Prince Giglio, who has the Ring, everyone knows that his uncle,

the King of Paflagonia, has usurped his rightful kingdom, and that he is too idle and ignorant to interfere. Why, the position he occupies in the Palace here [*pointing*], the ancient home of his royal race, is that of a mere dependant.

Enter GIGLIO down steps slowly.

Why, here he comes : a good-looking youth enough, even without a fairy ring. Good-morning, Prince !

Gigl. Hallo, who are you ? O, the Fairy Blackstick !—I beg your pardon, madam, I ought to have known you. Won't you come in ?

F. Black. Not now ; I came to speak to you. I drop in on my god-children occasionally to see how they are getting on. [*She looks at his hand.*] Why, what have you done with your ring ?

Gigl. What ring ?

F. Black. That little pearl ring you had from your mother.

Gigl. [*confused*] Oh—that ; I—I—gave it to my cousin the Princess Angelica.

F. Black. [*aside*] Oho ! Foolish boy, he has given his luck away : that accounts for the fine descriptions of the Princess that I have heard. And also, poor Giglio, if you knew it, for your loss of favour. Well, we will see whether she will make better use of it. [*GIGLIO has sunk into a love-lorn attitude.*] And is Angelica kind to you ?

Gigl. [*sighing*] Kind, madam ? She has made me quite ill with her cruelty. This is the first morning I have been down for a week. Well, ma'am, if you won't come in, I will wish you good morning. [*Exit.*]

F. Black. And so Angelica has the ring, has she? [GRUFFANUFF *comes out on steps.*

Gruff. Wot are you muttering there about the Princess, if you please, old woman? Clear out of this, will you?

F. Black. And who are you, to speak so to me?

Gruff. Why, if it hain't hold Blackstick! Well! the airs these old witches gives themselves! [*Guffaws.*] My lady, I would have you know I'm the honest servant of his Majesty, and my old woman is gov'ness to the Princess, that's wot we are! Master and Missis ain't at home to the likes of you, and if you don't clear yerself out, I'll come and do it for yer. [*He is about to slam the door in her face, when she interposes her wand.*] Now, look 'ere, do you think I am going to stay at this hall door hall day?

F. Black. You *are* going to stay at that door—all day and all night for many a long year.

[*Touches him with her wand.*

Gruff. Ha! ha! this is a good 'un! ha! ah! What's this? Let me down! Oh—o—h'm!

[*The Fairy changes him into a knocker.*¹

F. Black. Remain on that door until your time comes! I warrant you will have leisure to repent of having been rude to the Fairy Blackstick!

[*Tableau and curtain.*]

¹ See Note, p. 7.

SCENE II. *A Room in the Palace.**Enter the COUNTESS GRUFFANUFF.*

Gruff. Well, so I hear my old wretch of a husband has disappeared,—drunk himself to death, I suppose, as I always said he would ; and a precious good riddance ! *I'll take care that people soon forget the old ruffian. [Skips to glass to arrange dress, and calls.] Betsinda ! [Enter BETSINDA, and curtsays.]* Don't stand grinning there, you idle little hussy you, when the Princess's drawing-master will be here in ten minutes ! Get the things out. Where is her Highness's easel ?

[BETS. brings easel with ANGELICA'S beginning of a warrior's head and puts it in full sight.]

Enter ANGELICA ; falls into a chair and yawns ; GRUFFANUFF and BETSINDA curtsy to her.

Ang. O dear, I'm tired to death ; I can never do anything after a ball ; and Signor Lorenzo is coming in ten minutes, and that warrior but half done ! *[Tries to draw and then throws down pencil.]* My good Betsinda, you may as well finish what I have begun.

Bets. Yes, miss.

[Turns away easel and begins to draw.]

Ang. Methinks I improve under the Signor, Countess.

Gruff. Ah ! Princess, if it were possible for one who is perfect to improve——

Ang. Oh, well—yes—of course ; and Lorenzo is a delightful young man, and draws beautifully.

Gruff. The envious say he flatters very much, Princess.

Ang. Nay ; I am above flattery, and I think he did not make my picture handsome enough. I can't bear to hear a man of genius unjustly cried down, and I hope my dear papa will make Lorenzo a Knight of the Order of the Cucumber. Ah, here he is! Good-morrow, Signor.

Enter LORENZO. ANGELICA gives him her hand to kiss ; he is carrying a portrait, which he lays on the table.

Lor. Your Highness is graciousness itself. Countess, you look younger every day.

[GRUFF. *curtseys.*

Ang. [*aside to B.*] Betsinda ! how slow you are ; isn't that drawing finished yet ? Here, give me the pencil and let me sign it.

[*She scribbles "Angelica" hastily.*

LOR. comes forward.

Lor. Ah, madam, what a genius is yours ! Your poor master despairs.

Gruff. Oh, exquisite, is it not ?

[*Meanwhile ANG. takes up portrait which LOR. has laid down.*

Ang. Dear Signor Lorenzo, who is this ?

Gruff. I never saw anyone so handsome !

Lor. That, madam, is the portrait of my former august young Master, his Royal Highness Bulbo, Crown Prince of Crim-Tartary, Duke of Acroceraunia, and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Pumpkin ; that is the Order of the Pumpkin glittering on his manly breast, and received by his Royal Highness from his august father, King Padella, for his gallantry at the battle of Rimbombamento, where he slew with his own princely

hand the King of Ograria and two hundred and eleven giants.

Ang. [aside] What a Prince! so brave—so calm-looking—so young,—what a hero!

Lor. He is as accomplished as he is brave. He knows all languages perfectly; sings deliciously; plays every instrument; composes operas which have been acted a thousand nights running at the Imperial Theatre of Crim-Tartary. He danced in a ballet there before the King and Queen, in which he looked so beautiful that his cousin, the lovely daughter of the King of Circassia, died for love of him.

Ang. [with a sigh] Why did he not marry the poor Princess?

Lor. Because they were first cousins, Madam, and the clergy forbid these unions; and, besides, the young Prince had given his royal heart *elsewhere*.

Ang. And to whom?

Lor. I am not at liberty to mention the Princess's name.

Ang. But you may tell me the first letter of it!

Lor. That your Royal Highness is at liberty to guess.

Ang. Does it begin with a Z?

Lor. No.

[ANG. tries letters right through alphabet; but LOR. shakes his head at each.]

Ang. [faintly] Is it B?

Lor. No.

Ang. O dearest Gruffanuff, lend me your smelling bottle! Ah, Signor, can it be A?

Lor. It is A; and though I may not by my

royal master's orders tell your Royal Highness the Princess's name, whom he fondly, madly, rapturously loves, I may show you her portrait!

[*Leads ANG. to a curtain at back, draws it, and discloses a mirror.*

Ang. Me! [*Shrieks and falls into a chair.*

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE III. *A Breakfast Room.*

KING VALOROSO, QUEEN, and ANGELICA
discovered at breakfast.

King. My dear, this letter is to propose a visit here from Prince Bulbo, son of Padella, King of Crim-Tartary. He has already set out and will be here to-day.

Ang. What! that wicked, brave, delightful Prince Bulbo, so handsome, so accomplished, so witty, the conqueror of Rimbombamento, where he slew ten thousand giants?

King. Who told you of him, my dear?

Ang. A little bird.

Queen [*pouring tea*]. Poor Giglio!

Ang. [*tossing her head*]. Bother Giglio!

King. I wish—Giglio—was——

Queen. Was better? Yes, dear, he is better; he was out this morning for a few minutes; Angelica's little maid, Betsinda, told me so when she came to my room this morning with my early tea.

King. You are always drinking tea.

Queen. It is better than drinking port or brandy-and-water.

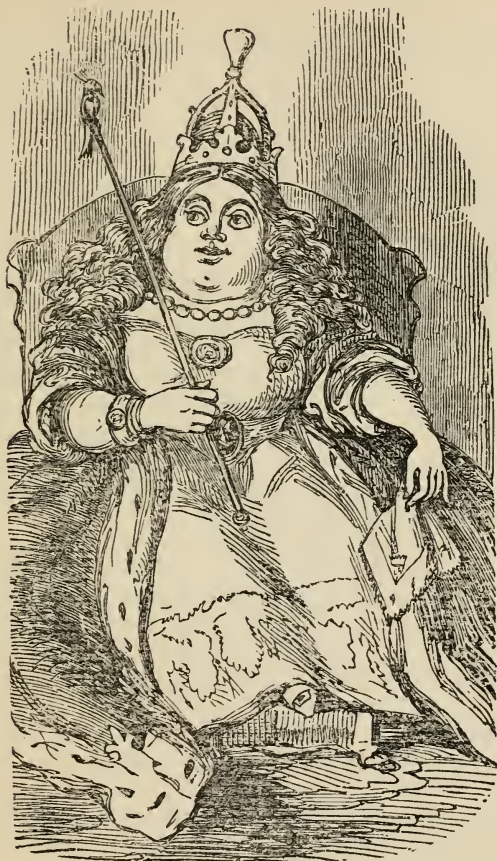
King. Well, well, my dear, I only said you were *fond* of drinking tea.—Angelica! I hope



KING VALOROSO

[Act I. Sc. iii.]

you have plenty of new dresses ; your milliner's bills are long enough.—My dear Queen, you



QUEEN ("MRS V.")

[Act I. Sc. iii.]

must see and have some parties. I prefer dinners, but, of course, you will be for balls.

Your everlasting blue velvet quite tires me; and, my love, I should like you to have a new necklace. Order one. Not more than a hundred or one hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

Queen. And Giglio, dear?

King [*roaring*]. Giglio may go to the——

Queen. Oh, Sir! Your own nephew! Our late King's only son!

King [*quietly*]. Giglio may go to the tailor's, and order the bills to be sent in for Glumboso to pay. Confound him!—I mean bless his dear heart! He need want for nothing; give him a couple of guineas for pocket money, my dear; and you may as well order yourself bracelets, while you are about the necklace, Mrs V.

Queen. Well, we must go and prepare for Prince Bulbo's reception.

[*Exeunt* QUEEN and ANGELICA, arm-in-arm. The KING rushes to a cupboard and fills an egg-cup with brandy, emptying it several times.

King [*dramatically*]. Ha! ha! now Valoroso is a man again!

But oh, ere I was a king

I needed not the intoxicating draught;

Once I detested the hot brandy wine

And quaffed no other fount but nature's rill:

It dashes not more quickly o'er the stones

Than I did, as, with blunderbuss in hand,

I brushed away the early morning dew,

And shot the partridge, snipe, or antlered deer!

Ah, well may England's dramatist remark,

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown!"

Why did I steal my nephew's, my young
Giglio's——

Steal, said I?—No, no, no, not steal, not steal!

Let me withdraw that odious expression!

I *took*, and on my manly head I set

The royal crown of Paflagonia;

I *took*, and with my royal arm I wield

The sceptral rod of Paflagonia;

I *took*, and in my outstretched hand I hold

The royal orb of Paflagonia!

Could a poor boy, a snivelling, drivelling boy

Was in his nurse's arms but yesterday,

And cried for sugar-plums and puled for pap,

Bear up the awful weight of crown, orb,
sceptre?

Gird on the sword my royal fathers wore,

And meet in fight the tough Crimean foe?

[*He changes his tone and picks up
BULBO'S letter.*

Aha! and talking of Crimean foes, there seems
to be a prospect of making the Crimeans friends
for good, and ending these expensive wars,
"A little bird told her," forsooth; oh! these
young people. [*Chuckles.*] Pooh! who thinks
of Giglio? I am the King of Paflagonia, and
Giglio is a fool. . . .

[*Exit, chucking BETSINDA under
the chin as she enters to clear
breakfast.*

*Enter GIGLIO, very pale, and BETS. curtseys
mischievously.*

Gigl. Betsinda, how is the Princess Angelica?

Bets. The Princess is very well, thank you,
my lord.

Gigl. [*aside*] Ah, yes, very well!—while I am sick with love!

Bets. [*aside*] Poor fellow! Prince or not, I don't care, I'm sure he's a very handsome young man, and it's too bad the way she treats him; I must comfort him even at the risk of deceiving him. [*To GIGLIO.*] I'm sure their Majesties will be very glad to see you down again, Sir; and the Princess——

Gigl. [*eagerly*] Well, dear Betsinda, the Princess——

Bets. I wonder now, if your Highness can guess who made the jelly and cooked the fowl that I brought you while you were ill, Sir?

Gigl. No.—Betsinda, can it have been——?

Enter ANGELICA, and BETS. nods and trips out.

Ang. Heavens, Giglio! *you* here, in such a dress? What a figure you are!

Gigl. Yes, dear Angelica, I can come downstairs, and feel so well to-day, thanks to the *fowl* and the *jelly*.

Ang. What do I know about fowls and jellies that you allude to them in that rude way?

Gigl. Why, didn't—didn't you send them, Angelica, dear?

Ang. I send them, indeed! Angelica, dear! No, Giglio, dear, *I* was engaged in getting the rooms ready for his Royal Highness the Prince of Crim-Tartary, who is coming to-day to pay my papa's court a visit!

Gigl. The Prince—of—Crim-Tartary!

Ang. I daresay you never heard of such a country. You don't know whether it is on the Red Sea or the Black Sea, I dare say!

Gigl. Yes, I do, it's on the Red Sea.

Ang. [*bursting out laughing*] O you ninny! You are so ignorant, you are really not fit for society! You know nothing but about horses and dogs, and are only fit to dine in a mess-room with my Royal Father's heaviest dragoons. Don't look so surprised at me, Sir! Go and put on your best clothes to receive the Prince, and let me get the room ready.

Gigl. O Angelica, Angelica, I didn't think this of you! This wasn't your language to me when you gave me this ring, and I gave you mine in the garden, and you gave me that k——

Ang. [*enraged*] Get out, you saucy, rude creature! How dare you to remind me of your rudeness? As for your little trumpery twopenny ring—there, Sir, there!

[*Throws it at him.*]

Gigl. It was my mother's marriage ring; she had it from a fairy!

Ang. I don't care whose marriage ring it was! Marry the person who picks it up, if she is a woman;—you shan't marry me. And give me back my ring! I know who'll give me much finer things than you ever gave me—much finer things than your little beggarly pearl nonsense!

Gigl. Very good, Miss! You may take back your ring too! [*Looks at her and starts back.*] Ha! what does this mean? Is this the woman I have been in love with all my life? Have I been such a ninny as to throw away my regard upon you? Why! actually—yes—you are a little crooked!

Ang. Oh, you wretch!

Gigl. And, upon my conscience, you—you squint a little!

Ang. Eh?

Gigl. And your hair is red—and you are marked with the small-pox—and what? you have three false teeth—and one leg shorter than the other!

Ang. You brute, you brute, you!

[Boxes his ears and pulls his hair.]

Gigl. *[laughing and escaping]* O dear me, Angelica, don't pull out *my* hair, it hurts! You might remove a good deal of your own, as I perceive, without scissors or pulling at all! O ho! ho! ha! ha! ha! *[Laughs loud.]*

Enter HEDZOFF.

Hedz. Royal Highnesses, their Majesties expect you in the Pink Throne-room, where they await the arrival of the Prince of Crim-Tartary. *[Exeunt GIGLIO, ANG., and HEDZOFF.]*

Enter GRUFFANUFF and JACKY.

Gruff. Come, Jacky, we are late; I would not miss the arrival of the dear Prince for worlds. How do I look, I wonder? *[Looks into glass and arranges dress; then, turning, sees the ring on the floor.]* What do I see shining down there? Jacky, go and pick it up. *[He brings it, and while he does so she exclaims]* How nice you do look, Jacky!

Jacky *[when she has it]* O mum! how—how *be-you-ootiful* you do look, mum, to-day, mum!

Gruff. *[pleased]* Eh! get along with you, you little flatterer, do! Ah! here is the dear Captain! *[Re-enter HEDZOFF.]* Has his Royal Highness arrived, Captain Hedzoff?

Hedz. My dear Madam, excuse me, but you look like an angel to-day. No, Madam, he is

not yet arrived, but is expected at any minute.

Gruff. Come, then, Jacky.

[*Bows, smirks, and exit, with JACKY holding her train. HEDZ. follows.*

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE IV. *The Pink Throne-room.*

The KING and QUEEN on throne; ANGELICA at their feet; at one side GIGLIO and GRUFFANUFF, and at the other GLUMBOSO and HEDZOFF.

Trumpets. Enter BULBO, with a large rose in his buttonhole.

Bulb. Your Majesties and Your Royal Highnesses must excuse the disorder of my costume. I have ridden three hundred miles since breakfast, so eager was I to behold the Prin—— the Court and august family of Paflagonia, and I could not wait one minute before appearing in your Majesties' presence.

[*GIGLIO bursts out laughing and whispers to GRUFFANUFF.*

King [hurriedly] Your Royal Highness is welcome in any dress. Glumboso, a chair for his Royal Highness.

Ang. Any dress his Royal Highness wears is a court dress!

Bulb. Ah, but you should see my other clothes! I should have had them on, but that stupid carrier has not brought them. [*GIGLIO laughs.*] Who's that laughing?

Gigl. I was laughing, because you said just now that you were in such a hurry to see the Princess that you could not wait to change

your dress ; and now you say you come in those clothes because you have no others.



PRINCE BULBO

[Act I. Sc. iv.]

Bulb. And who are you ?

Gigl. [haughtily] My father was King of this country, and I am his only son, Prince !

King [*flurried*] Ha! hm! Dear Prince Bulbo, I forgot to introduce your Royal Highness to my dear nephew, his Royal Highness Prince Giglio. Know each other! Giglio, give his Royal Highness your hand!

[GIGLIO *squeezes his hand till he cries out and drops the rose.*

Bulb. My rose! my rose! quick, pick it up!

[HEDZOFF *picks it up and hands it to him, and he scowls at GIGLIO.*

Queen. It is time to dress for dinner. Prince, if your clothes have not come, we shall be very happy to see you as you are.

[*Goes out with KING. BULBO follows with ANGELICA, and then all the rest but GIGLIO and GRUFF.*

Gruff. O dear Prince, how could you speak so haughtily in the presence of their Majesties? I protest I thought I should have fainted.

Gigl. I should have caught you in my arms!

Gruff. Why were you so cruel to Prince Bulbo, dear Prince?

Gigl. [*fiercely*] Because I hate him!

Gruff. [*putting her handkerchief to her eyes*] You are jealous of him, and still love poor Angelica!

Gigl. I did, but I love her no more: I despise her. Were she heiress to twenty thousand thrones, I would despise her and scorn her. But why speak of thrones? I have lost mine—I am too weak to recover it—I am alone and have no friends.

Gruff. [*tenderly*] O say not so, dear Prince!

Gigl. Besides, I am so happy here with you, that I would not change my place; no, not for the throne of the world! [GRUFF. *writes a paper*

at a side table.] What is it that you are writing, you charming Gruffy?

Gruff. Only an order for you to sign, dear Prince, for giving coals and blankets to the poor, this cold weather: your Royal Highness's order will do, as the King and Queen are not here.

Gigl. [*signing it*]. There, now I must run away and dress.

[Kisses his hand to her, and exit. She dances about when he is gone, and waves the paper.]

Gruff. O, you foolish boy! You should read what you sign. Listen to this [*reads*]:—

“This is to give notice that I, Giglio, only son of Savio, King of Paflagonia, hereby promise to marry the charming and virtuous Barbara Griselda, Countess Gruffanuff, widow of the late Jenkins Gruffanuff, Esq.”

O my goodness! I shall be the rightful Queen of Paflagonia! Griselda Paflagonia! How well it sounds! O, I shall go mad with joy.

[Skips out waving paper.]

[Curtain.]

SCENE V. *A Hall Upstairs.*

Enter GRUFFANUFF, in nightcap, and BETSINDA, with warming-pan.

Gruff. Betsinda, you dressed my hair very nicely to-day; I promised you a little present. Here are five sh—no, here is a pretty little ring that I picked—that I have had some time.

[Gives BETS. the ring, who puts it on her finger.]

Bets. It's like the ring the Princess used to wear.

Gruff. No such thing—I have had it ever so

long; and now, as it is a very cold night, you may go and warm dear Prince Giglio's bed, like a good girl, and then you may unrip my green silk, and then you can just do me up a little cap for the morning, and then you can mend the hole in my silk stocking, and then you can go to bed, Betsinda. Mind, I shall want my cup of tea at five o'clock in the morning. [*Exit GRUFF. with candle.* BETS.

picks up warming-pan.

BETS. [*to herself*] I suppose I had better warm both the young gentlemen's beds.

. *Enter BULBO.*

Bulb. O! O! O! O! what a beyou-ooootiful creature you are! You angel, you peri—you rosebud—let me be thy bulbul—thy Bulbo too! Fly to the desert, fly with me! I never saw a young gazelle so glad me with its dark blue eye that had eyes like thine. Thou nymph of beauty, take, take this young heart. A truer never did itself sustain within a soldier's waistcoat. Be mine, be mine! Be Princess of Crim-Tartary! My royal father will approve our union; and as for that little carrotty-haired Angelica, I do not care a fig for her any more!

Bets. Go away, your Royal Highness, and go to bed, please.

Bulb. No, never till thou swearest to be mine, Thou lovely blushing chambermaid divine! Here at thy feet the royal Bulbo lies, The trembling captive of Betsinda's eyes!

Bets. Get along, your Royal Highness, and don't be ridiculous!

[*Gives him a touch of the pan.*]

Bulb. O—O—O!

Enter GIGLIO, who rushes at BULBO and kicks him into a corner, and then falls at BETSINDA'S feet.

Gigl. O divine Betsinda ! How have I lived fifteen years in thy company without seeing thy perfections ? What woman in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—nay, in Australia, only it is not yet discovered—can presume to be thy equal ? Angelica ? Pish ! Gruffanuff ? Phoo ! The Queen ? Ha, ha ! *Thou* art my Queen. Thou art the real Angelica, because thou art really angelic !

Bets. O Prince, I am but a poor chambermaid.

Gigl. Didst thou not tend me in my sickness, when all forsook me ? Did not thy gentle hand smooth my pillow, and bring me jelly and roast chicken ?

Bets. Yes, dear Prince, I did ; and I sewed your Royal Highness's shirt buttons on too, if you please, your Royal Highness !

[*BULBO begins to bellow and tear his hair ; GIGLIO turns upon him fiercely, and BETSINDA drops the warming-pan and runs off.*

Gigl. You great big blubbering booby, tearing your hair in the corner there ; of course you will give me satisfaction for insulting Betsinda. *You* dare to kneel down at Princess Giglio's feet and kiss her hand !

Bulb. She's not Princess Giglio ! She shall be Princess Bulbo !

Gigl. You are engaged to my cousin !

Bulb. I hate your cousin !

Gigl. You shall give me satisfaction for insulting her !

Bulb. I'll have your life !

Gigl. I'll run you through !

Bulb. I'll cut your throat !

Gigl. I'll blow your brains out !

Bulb. I'll knock your head off !

Gigl. I'll send a friend to you in the morning.

Bulb. I'll send a bullet into you in the afternoon !

Gigl. We'll meet again !

[Picks up warming-pan as BULBO goes out and kisses it as he follows.]

Meanwhile enter KING in his dressing-gown, following BETSINDA, whose hand he holds.

King. What is this racket ?

Bets. I think it is the young gentlemen quarrelling, Sir.

King. Charming chambermaid ! never mind the young men ! Turn thy eye on a middle-aged autocrat, who has been considered not ill-looking in his time !

Bets. O Sir, what will her Majesty say ?

King. Her Majesty ? Her Majesty be hanged !

Am I not Autocrat of Paflagonia ?

Runs not a river by my palace wall ?

Have I not sacks to sew up wives withal ?

Say but the word, that thou wilt be mine own—

Your mistress straightway in a sack is sewn,

And thou the sharer of my heart and throne !

[During this speech, enter on one side the QUEEN, GRUFF. and ANGELICA ; on the other GIGLIO with the warming-pan : he knocks the KING down, and then runs off. BETS. follows, with a scream. KING recovers]

*and gets up, aided by the
QUEEN and ANGELICA.*

King. Ho ! my Captain of the Guards !

Enter HEDZOFF.

Hedzoff, good Hedzoff, seize upon the Prince;
Thou'lt find him in his chamber two pair up.



KING VALOROSO AND HEDZOFF

[Act I. Sc. v.]

But now he dared, with sacrilegious hand,
To strike the sacred nightcap of a King—
Hedzoff, and floor me with a warming-pan !
Away, no more demur, the villain dies !
See it be done—or else—Ha ! hm ! Ha !—
mind thine own eyes !

[*Exit* KING, QUEEN, and ANGELICA.
HEDZOFF comes forward with GRUFF.

Hedz. Poor, poor Giglio! My noble young Prince, is it my hand must lead thee to death?

Gruff. Lead him to fiddlestick, Hedzoff! The King said you were to hang the Prince. Well, hang the Prince!

Hedz. I don't understand you. . . .

Gruff. You gaby! he didn't say *which* Prince! Well, then, take Bulbo, and hang *him*!

Hedz. [*dancing about*] Obedience is a soldier's honour! Prince Bulbo's head will do capitally!

[*Exit HEDZOFF, with warrant.*]

Gruff. And as for that monster, that wretch, that ungrateful little pauper upstart Betsinda, she shall not come between the Prince and me for nothing. She shall quit the house to-morrow!

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE VI. *The Breakfast Room.*

BETSINDA *is laying the breakfast.* Enter GRUFFANUFF, ANGELICA, and the QUEEN.

All. Here she is!

Queen. You wretch!

Ang. You little vulgar thing!

Gruff. You hussy!

Queen. Get out of my sight!

Ang. Go away with you, do!

Gruff. Quit the premises!

Queen. How dare you flirt with the King?

Ang. How dare you flirt with Prince Bulbo?

Gruff. How dare you flirt with Prince Giglio?

Queen. Give her the rags she wore when she came into the house, and turn her out of it!

Ang. Mind she does not go with *my* shoes on, which I lent her so kindly!

Gruff. [*giving her old clothes*] Take those rags, you little beggar creature, and strip off everything belonging to honest people, and go about your business!

Bets. Won't you give me a pair of shoes to go out in the snow, mum, if you please, mum?

Gruff. No, you hussy!

[*Drives her out with the poker.*]

Queen [*pleasantly*]. And now let us think about breakfast.

Ang. I could not decide which dress to put on, Mamma, the pink or the pea-green. Which do you think the dear Prince will like best?

Enter KING.

King. Mrs V., let us have sausages for breakfast! Remember we have Prince Bulbo staying with us. [*Enter JOHN with sausages.*] John, where is his Royal Highness?

John. I took up his Roilighness's shaving-water, your Majesty, and he wasn't in his room, which I spose his Roilighness has just stepped hout.

King. Stepped out in the snow? Impossible! [*Takes a sausage.*] My dear, take one! Angelica, won't you have a saveloy? [*ANG. takes one.*]

Enter GLUMBOSO and HEDZOFF.

Glum. I am afraid, your Majesty——

King. No business before breakfast, Glum. Breakfast first, business next. Mrs V., some more sugar!

Glum. Sire, I am afraid if we wait till after

breakfast it will be too late; he—he'll be hanged at half-past nine!

Ang. Don't talk about hanging and spoil my breakfast, you unkind vulgar man, you! John, some more mustard! Pray, who is to be hanged?

Glum. Sire, it is the Prince.

King. Talk about business after breakfast, I tell you.

Glum. We shall have a war, Sire, depend upon it. His father, King Padella——

King. His father, King who? King Padella is not Giglio's father! My brother King Savio was Giglio's father!

Glum. It's Prince Bulbo they are hanging, Sire, not Prince Giglio!

Hedz. You told me to hang the Prince, and I took the ugly one. I didn't, of course, think your Majesty intended to murder your own flesh and blood!

[*KING throws a plate at HEDZ. and ANG. goes off in hysterics.*]

King. Turn the cock of the urn upon her Royal Highness! The great question is, am I fast or am I slow? If I'm slow, we may as well go on with the breakfast. If I'm fast, why, there is just the possibility of saving Prince Bulbo. It's a doosid awkward mistake, Hedzoff, and——

Ang. Can't you see that while you are talking my Bulbo is being hung?

King. By Jove, she is always right, that girl, and I am so absent. Ha! Hark, there go the drums. What a doosid awkward thing, though——

Ang. O Papa, you goose! Write the reprieve, and let me run with it. [*Brings paper, etc.*]

King. Confound it, where are my spectacles? Angelica, go up into my bedroom, look under my pillow, not your Mamma's; there you'll see my keys and—— Well, well, what impetuous things these girls are! [*Exit ANGELICA, and re-enter with keys.*] Now, love, you must go all the way back for my desk, in which my spectacles are. If you *would* but have heard me out—— [*Exit ANG.*] Be hanged to her! There she is off again. Angelica! ANGELICA! [*Re-enter ANG.*] My dear, when you go out of a room, how often have I told you, *shut the door!* That's a darling; that's all. [*Exit, and re-enter ANGELICA with spectacles.* KING *writes the reprieve, and she flies out with it.*] You'd better stay, my love, and finish the muffins; be sure it is too late; hand me the raspberry jam, please! [*The half-hour strikes.*] There goes the half-hour; I knew it was. [*Re-enter HEDZOFF.*] And now, Hedzoff, let us have no more mistakes; Prince Giglio must die before mid-day.

Hedz. Very sorry, your Majesty, but I can't find the Prince anywhere. He must have got wind of his danger, and run off.

King. Run off? Then run after him, you dolt! Fetch him back, can't you, and let us have an end of this nonsense.

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE VII. *The Scaffold.*

HEDZOFF (*as executioner*), BULBO, and ARCHBISHOP.

BULBO, *with rose in his mouth, lays his head on the block, when enter ANGELICA, running.*

Ang. Reprieve, reprieve!

Hedz. and Archb. Reprieve, reprieve!

Ang. [*embracing BULBO*] O my Prince, my lord, my love, my Bulbo! Thine Angelica has been in time to save thy precious existence, sweet rosebud, to prevent thee being nipped in thy young bloom. Had aught befallen thee, Angelica too had died, and welcomed death, that joined her to her Bulbo!

Bulb. [*dropping rose*] H'm! there's no accounting for tastes!

Ang. What disquiets thee now, my own?

Bulb. I tell you what it is, Angelica; since I came here yesterday, there has been such a row and disturbance, and quarrelling, and fighting, and chopping heads off, that I am inclined to go back to Crim-Tartary.

Ang. But with me as thy bride, my Bulbo!—Though wherever thou art is Crim-Tartary to me, my bold, my beautiful, my Bulbo!

Bulb. Well, well, I suppose we must be married. Doctor, you came to read the Funeral service—read the Marriage service, will you? What must be, must. That will satisfy Angelica, and then, in the name of peace and quietness, do let us go back to breakfast!

Ang. [*picking up the rose*] Sweet rose! that bloomed upon my Bulbo's lip, never, never will I part from thee!

Bulb. [*looking at her*] Ah! what is this? are my eyes suddenly opened? [*Falls at her feet.*] Angelica! Angel! forgive thy slave his seeming coldness! Thy beauty——

Ang. O dear, that's enough! Come home to breakfast. [*Aside*] After all, he's not so handsome; no, quite the reverse; and not clever; and not well-bred like Giglio; no, on the contrary, dreadfully vul——

Enter KING.

King. Pooh! stuff! We will have no more of this shilly-shallying! Call the Archbishop, and let the Prince and Princess be married off-hand! [*ARCHBISHOP comes forward; they kneel before him.*]

[*Tableau. Curtain.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A Forest on the Border of Crim-Tartary.
Finger-post : "To Bosforo."*

Enter GIGLIO.

Gigl. I wonder where I am now?—out of reach of my bloodthirsty old uncle, I hope, at any rate. Wonder what on earth I'm going to do? I wish I had something to eat; wish it wasn't so precious lonely in this wretched place. Hallo! here's somebody coming.

Enter FAIRY BLACKSTICK disguised as an old woman.

F. Black. Give a poor old woman a penny, my pretty young gentleman.

Gigl. Awfully sorry, but I have left my purse at home; I came away in a hurry.

F. Black. Then I must just lie down and die in the snow.

Gigl. O dear, Ma'am, now don't do that! Here, take my cloak; it will keep the cold out, at all events.

F. Black. Thank you, Sir; and now, one more thing: will you kindly read me what is written on that sign-post, my old eyes are too dim to see the letters.

Gigl. I—I—am really extremely sorry, Madam, but I am ashamed to confess that I cannot read.

F. Black. My dear Gigl——my good Mr Giles, you are a young man and have plenty of time before you. You have nothing to do but to improve yourself. Who knows but that you may find a use for your knowledge some day?

When—when you may be wanted at home, as some people may be.

Gigl. Good heavens, Madam, do you know me?

F. Black. I know a number of funny things; I have seen some people spoilt by good fortune, and others, as I hope, improved by hardship. I advise you to go back to the last town you passed through, Bosforo by name. Stay there and study, and remember your old friend to whom you were kind.

Gigl. And who is my old friend?

F. Black. When you want anything, look in this bag, which I leave to you as a present, and be grateful to——

Gigl. To whom, Madam? [*as he turns to go*].

F. Black. To the Fairy Blackstick!

[*GIGLIO bows low, and exit.*]

The FAIRY BLACKSTICK retires; then enter in front BETSINDA slowly, in rags, and sinks down.

Bets. O, I am so tired, I really cannot go on just yet; though what is the good of going on at all, I am sure I don't know. I suppose I am nearly in Crim-Tartary by this time, where Prince Bulbo's father Padella reigns. Why, just think, I might have been Queen of the country, if I had accepted the Prince when he offered me his hand the other evening! Just fancy, I a Queen! O dear, how very funny he did look when he tore out all that hair! [*Laughs*; *F. BLACK. comes forward.*]

F. Black. [*aside*] Aha! this young woman does not seem much cast down by her misfortunes! [*To BETS.*] Well, my dear, and

what is it you find so amusing in this dreary place?

Bets. [aside] Oh, what a queer old woman! Well, she will be company at all events. [*To F. BLACK.*] Good-day, Ma'am; I was laughing to think how funny it would be if I was a Queen.

F. Black. [aside] Perhaps not so funny as you think, young lady. [*To B.*] My dear Rosalba—

Bets. My name is Betsinda, Madam.

F. Black. Oh, is it? I suppose I called you Rosalba because you are so strangely like the poor little Princess, daughter of the late king of this country, who was lost in a forest not far from here, and never seen again. What is your history, Betsinda?

Bets. I was left when quite a little child, at the town I have come from, with no clothes but this cloak and this little shoe. The persons who took care of me were angry with me,—for no fault of mine, I hope. They sent me away with my old clothes, and here I am. But I remember, long ago, being in a great forest—and—it is so very odd and strange—living there in a cave with lions—yes, I am sure it was with lions—a big lioness that I called mother, and two cubs, my dear brothers.—Oh, I'm sure I cannot have dreamed it!

F. Black. And before that can you remember nothing?

Bets. [slowly] Before that it is all very dim—but I seem to remember living in a very fine house, as fine as the King's in the town.

F. Black. Dear me; and can you recollect how you managed to go from the wood to the

town where you were found :—for it is a long way.

Bets. That is the oddest thing of all—I think it *must* be a dream—but I seem to remember being borne through the air by a lady, in a car drawn by dragons! It certainly seems *improbable*!

F. Black. My dear, the most improbable things are sometimes the true ones. Your memory serves you well. Now, listen; I am the lady who brought you from the forest——

Bets. Oh!

F. Black. And my name is the Fairy Blackstick; and your name is——

Bets. Not Betsinda, Ma'am?

F. Black. Your name is Rosalba, my love, and you are my god-child, and a——

Bets. A Princess, Ma'am? Can it be true?

F. Black. No, my dear, not a Princess now, but a Queen, the rightful Queen of this country! King Padella is a usurper; his son Bulbo is no true Prince, for you are the Queen of Crim-Tartary; I salute your Majesty!

Bets. [*drawing a long breath*] The Queen of Crim-Tartary! [*Holds herself up proudly; then turns to FAIRY BLACKSTICK.*] But what shall I do next, Ma'am? Look at these rags and my bare feet; who will ever believe that I am the Queen? Oh, Madam, I pray you advise me!

F. Black. Do you see a little house over yonder in the wood? An old man lives there, a woodcutter, who was once a nobleman of your father's court. He would never believe that you were dead; and he hates Padella, as indeed do many others. And he kept a little shoe

belonging to the Princess which he found in the wood in a lion's den. Show him the one that you carry, and he will not doubt your tale. Farewell, now, my dear girl; I will not forget you. *[Exit.]*

Bets. [sits down to think, and sighs] I wish my Prince knew that poor little Betsinda had become a Queen! But I daresay I shall never see him again, and he will soon forget me. But—suppose I do get my rightful throne. And suppose—oh, suppose *he* won back *his* from Valoroso, and became a King, and suppose—— But what is the use of supposing? If I am to become Queen, I have my work before me. *[Exit.]*

[Curtain.]

SCENE II. *Giglio's College-room at Bosforo.*

GIGLIO, *in cap and gown, reading big books. He reads till clock strikes nine.*

Gigl. [jumping up and looking at his watch] Hallo! nine o'clock! Well, I never, how the time has flown; and I've had nothing to eat this morning. Well, that is a good one! Imagine the good-for-nothing Prince Giglio being so interested in a book (Greek, too!) that he forgets his breakfast. Well, luckily there need be no delay now, thanks to my bag. *[Goes to bag, takes out cup of coffee, and sits down.]* Here's the health of the Fairy Blackstick! Well, I won't waste time.

[Falls to reading again as he breakfasts.]

Enter JONES with newspaper.

Jones. Hallo, Giles, still grinding, of course; can't you drop that even at breakfast?

Gigl. No good wasting time, Jones, done too much of that already.

Jones. No; but, I say, do stop a minute and listen to this most extraordinary thing! It's in all the papers this morning.

Gigl. Oh, well, forge ahead!

[*Sits back in his chair.*]

Jones [*reading from a newspaper*]. Everyone knows the sad history of the little Princess Rosalba, daughter of the late King of Crim-Tartary; how she wandered from the Palace and was supposed to have been eaten up by lions. Her death seemed to be certain; the mangled remains of a cloak, and a little shoe, were found by Baron Spinachi, formerly an Officer of the King's household. These relics he carried home, and has kept up to the present time, where he dwells in the humble capacity of a woodcutter on the outskirts of Crim-Tartary.

Last Tuesday week Baron Spinachi and a number of gentlemen appeared in arms, crying, "God save Rosalba, first Queen of Crim-Tartary!" and surrounding a lady whom report describes as "beautiful exceedingly." This personage states that she was brought from the forest fifteen years since, and left in the palace garden of Blombodinga, where Her Royal Highness the Princess Angelica, now married to Prince Bulbo of Crim-Tartary, found the child, and, with the elegant benevolence which distinguishes her, gave the little outcast a shelter and a home. She was educated in the Palace in a menial capacity under the name of Betsinda. [*Giglio starts up.*] Not giving satisfaction, she was dismissed, and left the country. On the same morning Prince

Giglio, nephew of the King, also quitted the Palace, and has not since been heard of.

Gigl. Oh, never mind *him*! Go on about Betsinda—about Rosalba.

Jones. That's all. Oh no, here's something else! [*Reads*] SECOND EDITION, EXPRESS.—We hear that the troop under Baron Spinachi has been utterly routed by King Padella, who has carried off the so-called Princess a prisoner to the Capital. Rum story, ain't it? [*Pause.*] Here's something also for you, Giles! [*GIGL. goes to the window and meditates, while JONES continues.*] *University News.*—Yesterday at the Schools at Bosforo the distinguished young student, Mr Giles, read a Latin oration, and was complimented by the Chancellor with the highest University honour, the Wooden Spoon. He also received the following prizes:—

The Spelling Prize.
The Writing Prize.
The History Prize.
The Catechism Prize.
The French Prize.

The Arithmetic Prize.
The Latin Prize.
The Good Conduct Prize.

Gigl. [*pacing to and fro*] Never mind that stuff!—Jones, I have that to tell you shall astonish your honest mind.

Jones. Go it, old boy!

Gigl. Jones, disguise is henceforth useless; I am no more the humble student Giles; I am the descendant of a royal line—I am that Giglio—I am, in fact, Paflagonia!

[*JONES kneels.*

Rise, Jones, kneel not, thou true heart!
My faithless uncle, when I was a baby

44 THE ROSE AND THE RING [ACT II

Filched from me that brave crown my father
left me ;

And had I any thoughts about my wrongs,
Soothed me with promises of near redress.

I should espouse his daughter, young Angelica
We two should reign in Paflagonia.

His words were false—false as Angelica's heart

False as Angelica's hair, complexion, teeth !

For she preferred Crim-Tartary's stupid heir.

'Twas then I turned my eyes upon Betsinda,
Rosalba as she now is. I saw in her

The blushing sun of all perfection—

The pink of—— Ha !

What means this trampling in the city street ?

[Looks from window.]

An army ! ha ! arranged for battle, ha !

Why, those are Paflagonian banners, and——

Enter HEDZOFF.

Why, Hedzoff ! gallant friend, knowest thou not
thy Prince ?

Tell me, what means this mighty armament ?

Hedz. My Lord, we march as the allies of
great Padella, Crim-Tartary's monarch. Alas !
a soldier must obey his orders ; and also, though
alack ! that I should say it, to seize, wherever
I should light upon him, on the body of Giglio,
former Prince of Paflagonia !—My Prince, give
up your sword without more ado. Look ! we
are three thousand men to one.

Gigl. Give up my sword ! Giglio give up his
sword !

Nay, never, honest Hedzoff, gallant friend !

Say, which is best ? to serve a traitor knave

Like Valoroso,—to ally with such

As false Padella ?—Or to fight for *me*.

Your rightful King, who even now am bound
Forth to assist a fair and injured lady,
Rosalba, whom Padella holds in thrall,
Whose kingdom groans beneath th' usurper's
hand?

Hedz. and Jones. Hurray! hurray! Long live
King Giglio! Down with Valoroso and Padella!

Gigl. Jones, hie thee to the buttery, and bid
The knaves provide my army plenteous beer!

[*Exit. JONES.*
To drink my health and false Padella's fall!
Hedzoff, my friend, wilt take a glass with me?

Re-enter JONES with beer.

Here's Queen Rosalba's health; down with
Padella!

[*Army, without:* "Three cheers for King
Giglio and Queen Rosalba! hurray! hurray!
hurrray!"]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE III. *The Court of PADELLA'S Castle.*

In front, an open space railed off from a raised seat behind.
KING PADELLA seated. Stone in middle foreground.

Pad. Ho, guards, bring forth Rosalba.

Enter GUARDS, leading ROSALBA in a long white dress.
She stands centre, and GUARDS sit behind.

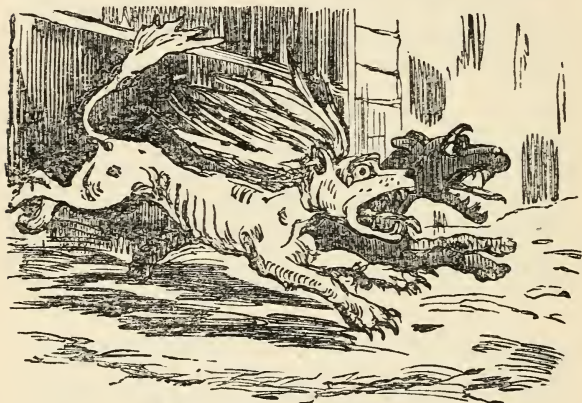
Pad. [*rising*] Now, Madam, I give you one
more chance. Once more I lay at your feet
my hand, my heart, and my throne. My three
wives lie buried in my ancestral vaults; the
third perished but a year since, and this heart
pines for a consort. Say Yes, Madam; Padella
is not accustomed to be denied. I see consent

46 THE ROSE AND THE RING [ACT II

in your Majesty's lovely eyes; their glances fill my soul with rapture.

Ros. O Sir! Your Majesty is exceedingly kind, but, as I told your Majesty before, I have a prior attachment to a young gentleman by the name of Prince Giglio, and never—never can marry anyone but him.

Pad. [*fuming*] Then, Madam, prepare instantly for death! You shall die in torture;



THE LIONS. [Act II. Sc. iii.]

ha! I have it: we have in our cages two fierce lions, which our own royal hand captured in the woods. Unless you at once repent of your decision, they shall forthwith tear you to pieces.

Ros. Even this I would suffer rather than accept the hand of my father's murderer.

Pad. [*gnashing his teeth*] Guard, let out the lions! [*Exit GUARD. Enter LIONS, and rush at ROSALBA, but stop short suddenly; they fall down and fawn on her, and she embraces them.*]

Ros. O my dear brothers! do you then remember your sister in the forest?

[*Kissing them.*]

Pad. Ha! What does this mean? These lions are tame beasts from a circus! I believe they are little boys dressed up in doormats! But since they will not eat the young woman——

[*Crowd outside, "Let her off! let her off!"*]

Pad. No! Let the beef-eaters go down and chop her in pieces! The hussy shall die in torture!

[*Crowd, "Shame! shame!"*]

Pad. [*furious*] Who dares cry "shame?" Fling any scoundrel that says a word down among the lions!

[*Pause: then trumpet, and enter HEDZOFF. The LIONS growl, but ROSALBA stops them.*]

Ros. No, no, dear brothers! it is an old friend of mine. [*HEDZ. kisses her hand.*]

Pad. Ha! an my memory serves me, it is the gallant Captain Hedzoff!

Hedz. Bespeaking first safe conduct from your Lordship, permit me to deliver my King's message.

Pad. My Lordship! ha! that title soundeth strangely in the anointed ears of a crowned King! Speak out your message.

Hedz. [*reads*] "O yes! O yes! O yes! Know all men by these presents that we, Giglio, King of Paflagonia, having assumed our rightful throne and title, long time falsely borne by our usurping uncle, styling himself King of Paflagonia——"

Pad. Ha!

Hedz. "Hereby summon the false traitor,

48 THE ROSE AND THE RING [ACT II

Padella, calling himself King of Crim-Tartary, to release from cowardly imprisonment his liege lady and rightful sovereign Rosalba, Queen of Crim-Tartary, and restore her to her throne ; in default of which, I, Giglio, proclaim the said Padella *sneak, traitor, humbug, usurper, and coward!* I challenge him to meet me with fists or with pistols, with battle-axe or sword, with blunderbuss or singlestick, on foot or on horseback, and will prove my words upon his wicked, ugly body! God save the King!"

Pad. [*with forced calm*] Is that all? [*HEDZ. bows.*] And what says my good brother of Paflagonia, my dear Bulbo's father-in-law, to this *rubbish*?

Hedz. The King's uncle hath been deprived of the crown he unjustly wore ; he and his ex-minister, Glumboso, are now in prison awaiting the sentence of my royal master. After the battle of Bombardaro——

Pad. Of what?

Hedz. Of Bombardaro, where my liege, his present Majesty, *would* have performed prodigies of valour, but that the whole of his uncle's Army came over to our side, with the exception of Prince Bulbo——

Pad. Ah! my boy, my boy! My Bulbo was no traitor!

Hedz. Prince Bulbo, far from coming over to us, ran away, Sir, but I caught him. The Prince is a prisoner in our camp just outside the city, and the most terrific tortures await him if a hair of the Princess Rosalba's head is injured.

Pad [*fuming*] Do they?
Do they indeed? So much the worse for Bulbo!

I've twenty sons as lovely each as Bulbo !
Whip, whack, flog, starve, rack, punish, torture
Bulbo !

Break all his bones, roast him or flay him alive,
Pull all his pretty teeth out one by one !

But justly dear as Bulbo is to me—
Joy of my eyes, fond treasure of my soul—

Ha, ha ! ha, ha ! revenge is dearer still !

Ho ! torturers, rackmen, executioners !

Get lots of boiling lead ! Bring out Rosalba !

Hedz. Farewell then, pretty Betsinda, lovely
Queen ! *[Exit, blubbering.]*

SCENE IV. GIGLIO'S Quarters.

GIGLIO *smoking and walking up and down.*

HEDZOFF *standing by.*

Hedz. And so, your Majesty, I took your royal message to Padella, and bear his back to you. I told him that you would hold Prince Bulbo answerable ; he only said he had twenty sons as good as Bulbo, and forthwith bade the ruthless executioners proceed.

Gigl. O cruel father ! O unhappy son !
Go, Hedzoff, go and bring Prince Bulbo hither.

[Exit HEDZOFF, and re-enter with

BULBO in chains.

O my poor Bulbo, hast thou heard the news ?

Thy brutal father has condemned Rosalba,
Put her to death, P—p—p—prince Bulbo !

Bulb. [blubbering] What ! killed Betsinda ?
Boo-hoo-hoo ! Betsinda ! pretty Betsinda ! dear
Betsinda ! She was the dearest little girl in
the world ! I love her twenty thousand times
better than even Angelica !

Gigl. Shake hands ! you're a good fellow ! I

wish I'd known you sooner! But—er—I'm sorry to say there's something—er—else! Alas! in consequence of your father's cruel and dastardly behaviour to Rosalba, Prince Bulbo, you must instantly be—be executed! You see I have promised, and a king's promise must be kept.

Hedz. [*to BULBO*] Never mind, Sir! Just think, if *you* had won the battle you might have hanged Prince Giglio!

Bulb. [*sobbing*] Y—yes, but that's no comfort to me now!

Gigl. Well, farewell, Bulbo! [*offering his hand*]. Hullo! what's that? [*A roar of a lion, and shouts of "Long live Rosalba," outside.*] Go, Hedzoff, and inquire the cause of this tumult. [*Exit HEDZOFF, and re-enter quickly.*

Hedz. News! news! your Majesty, glorious news! Padella is dead, slain by his own lions! Queen Rosalba is proclaimed and is at this minute entering the camp!

[*Shouts, and enter ROSALBA, crowned, leading a lion. GIGLIO falls at her feet; BULBO hugs the lion.*

Bulb. Oh, you darling old beast! O how glad I am to see you, and dear Bets—— that is, Rosalba!

Ros. [*turning to him*] What, is it you, poor Bulbo? Oh, I am so glad to see you again!

Gigl. Bulbo, my boy, I am delighted, for your sake, that her Majesty has arrived.

Bulb. So am I, and *you know why!*

Hedz. Sire, it is half-past eight; shall we proceed with the execution? [*Showing warrant.*

Gigl. Prince Bulbo is reprieved this time, Hedzoff. There can be nothing but rejoicing

to-day! - My Queen, thou wilt grace our feast; Bulbo, you will come? I wish Angelica was here, for your sake, old boy.

Enter FAIRY BLACKSTICK with ANGELICA.

F. Black. She *is* here; she was so impatient to come to her husband when she heard he was set free, that I brought her on my wand. [*ANG. embraces BULBO. To GIGL. and ROS.*] Bless you, my dears! now you see, what I said from the first, that a little misfortune has done you both good; you, Giglio, had you been bred in prosperity, would scarcely have learned to read and write; you, Rosalba, thanks partly to the magic ring you are wearing, would have been so flattered that your little head might have been turned like Angelica's, who thought herself too good for Giglio.

Ros. As if anybody could be good enough for him.

Gigl. [*kissing her hand*] Rosalba needs no ring, I am sure; she is beautiful enough, in my eyes, without any enchanted aid.

Ros. O Sir!

Gigl. Take off the ring and try. [*She does so.*] There! I see no difference! [*To BULBO*] Here, Bulbo, my poor lad, come and try on this ring; the Queen makes it a present to you. Now to the feast: and then back to Paflagonia, where there shall be such a wedding as was never seen! [*Dance, and exeunt in procession.*

BULBO and ANGELICA stay behind.

Bulb. After all, she is very pretty, but not *extraordinarily* handsome!

Ang. Oh, by no means! Bulbo, I was so glad

to come ; it is so dull at home with Papa in prison and Mamma getting quite thin with anxiety, and that awful old Gruffanuff giving herself the strangest airs :—I can't understand her : she makes me quite uncomfortable ; it is as if——

Bulb. Oh, my dear Angelica, never mind that old scarecrow ; I'm very hungry, and I smell a good dinner. Come ! *[Exeunt.]*

[Curtain.]

SCENE V. *The Court at Paflagonia.*

ROSALBA and GIGLIO in front, dressed for the wedding, and the FAIRY talking to them. Behind, ANGELICA and BULBO, the ARCHBISHOP and HEDZOFF.

F. Black. And now, my dear children, I have given you the best advice in my power : remember above all, it beseems a good King, Giglio, to be just to all men and *never to break his promise.*

Ros. A good King, my dear Fairy ? Of course he will be a good King ! Break his promise ! Can you fancy my Giglio would ever do anything so improper, so unlike him ? No, never !

Gigl. [aside to ROS.] Why is Fairy Blackstick always advising me, and warning me to keep my word ? Does she suppose I am not a man of sense and a man of honour ? Methinks she rather presumes on her position.

Ros. Hush ! dear Giglio, you know Blackstick

has been *very* kind to us, and we must not offend her.

[F. BLACK. *turns to* BULBO *and* ANG.

Enter GRUFFANUFF in bridal dress, with JACKY.

Gigl. [to ROS.] What can have induced that nideous old Gruffanuff to dress herself up in that absurd way? Did you ask her to be your bridesmaid, my dear? What a figure of fun she is! [*Clock strikes.*] Ha! eleven o'clock! Gentlemen and ladies, we must be starting. We must be at church before twelve.

Gruff. We must be at church before twelve!

Gigl. [bowing to ROS.] And then I shall be the happiest man in my dominions.

Gruff. Oh, my Giglio! Oh, my dear Majesty! and can it be that this happy moment at length has arrived?

Gigl. [puzzled] Of course it has arrived!

Gruff. And that I am about to become the enraptured bride of my adored Giglio? [*All start up.*] Lend me a smelling bottle, somebody! I shall certainly faint with joy.

Gigl. You my bride?

Ros. [clinging to him] You marry my Prince?

Gigl. Pooh! Nonsense! the woman's mad.

Gruff. [shrilly] I should like to know who else is going to be married if I am not? I should like to know if King Giglio is a gentleman, or if there is such a thing as justice in Paflagonia? My Lord Archbishop! will your Lordship sit by and see a poor, fond, tender, confiding creature put upon? Is not this

Giglio's signature? Does not this paper declare he is mine, and mine only?



COUNTESS GRUFFANUFF

[Act II. Sc. v.]

Archb. [reads solemnly] "This is to give notice that I, Giglio, only son of Savio, King of Paflagonia, hereby promise to marry the charming

Barbara Countess Gruffanuff, and widow of the late Jenkins Gruffanuff, Esq."

H'm! the document is certainly—a document.

F. Black. Is this your handwriting, Giglio?

Gigl. Y—y—y—es! Oh, she can't mean to nold me to it! You old wretch, what will you take to let me off? [ROSALBA swoons.] Help to the Queen, someone, her Majesty has fainted.

[ROSALBA is borne off.]

Gruff. [rushing at him] Justice! Justice!

Gigl. Won't you take a million pounds to let me off!

Gruff. I will have that and you too!

Gigl. Let us throw the crown jewels into the bargain!

Gruff. I will wear them by my Giglio's side!

Gigl. Will half, three-quarters, nineteen-twentieths of my kingdom do, Countess?

Gruff. What were all Europe to me without you, my Giglio?

Gigl. I will not marry her! O Fairy, give me counsel!

F. Black. "Why is the FAIRY BLACKSTICK always advising me and warning me to keep my word? does she suppose I am not a man of honour?"

Gigl. [bitterly] Well, Archbishop, since this Fairy has led me to the height of happiness but to dash me down into the depths of despair—since I am to lose Rosalba, let me at least keep my honour. Get up, Countess, and let us be married. I can keep my word, but I can die afterwards!

Gruff. Oh, dear Giglio! I knew I could trust thee! Jump into your carriages, ladies and gentlemen, let us go to church at once; and as

for dying, dear Giglio, no, no! thou wilt live to forget that insignificant little chambermaid of a Queen—thou wilt live to be consoled by thy Barbara!

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE VI. *Just outside Palace Door. Same as Act I.
Scene I.*

*The FAIRY BLACKSTICK, and ROSALBA in her cloak
on the steps.*

F. Black. And what are you going to do, my poor child?

Ros. What can I do, Ma'am, but go straight home, and try to be a good Queen in my own land? I am determined not to interfere between him and justice, and only tempt him to break his word; for he loves me, Madam, and I love him, and always shall, though I cannot marry him.

[*Turns to go.*]

F. Black. Stay a minute, my love! You cannot travel all that way by yourself. Wait till this cruel wedding is over, and then I will take you on my wand.

Ros. Yes, I will stay! The procession will be out of the Palace directly; and I hope it is not foolish and wicked of me to want to see him once more, even though he does not know me. Then I will go home with you, and live and die unmarried, like Queen Elizabeth; and, of course, I shall leave my crown to him when I quit this world.

F. Black. [*embracing her*] That's a dear, brave girl. Now, here they come!

[They draw back: then enter down the steps the procession, which groups itself; and last GIGL. and GRUFF., arm-in-arm. The FAIRY comes forward and stands in their path.]

Gruff. Get out of the way, please. I wonder why you are always poking your nose into other people's affairs?

F. Black. Are you determined to make this poor young man unhappy?

Gruff. To marry him? Yes! What business is it of yours? Pray, Madam, don't say "you" to a Queen!

F. Black. You *won't* take the money he offered you?

Gruff. *[barks]* No!!

F. Black. You won't let him off his bargain, though *you know* you cheated him when you made him sign the paper?

Gruff. Impudence! Guard! remove this woman! *[F. BLACKSTICK waves her wand, and all stay in their places.]*

F. Black. You won't take anything in exchange for your bond, Mrs Gruffanuff? I speak for the *last time*!

Gruff. NO!! I'll have my husband, my husband, my husband!!

F. Black. YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR HUSBAND!

[Puts her hand on the knocker, which slides in; the door flies open and MR GRUFFANUFF straddles out.]

Mr Gruff. Master's not at home!

[The COUNTESS GRUFFANUFF shrieks and faints. ROSALBA flies to GIGLIO.]

All. Hurray, hurray, hip, hip hurray!
Long live the King and Queen,
Were ever such things seen?
No, never, never, never!
The Fairy Blackstick forever!!

[*Tableau.*]

F. Black. So our little story ends,
Merry Christmas, good my friends!

[*Dance and Curtain.*]

THE GOODY-WITCH.

NOTE.

The Goody-Witch and the Huntsman might be big boys.

Big Sister might be a big girl. All the other characters should be children.

The little Apple-tree may be in a pot. It must be made to shake with an invisible string.

SONGS IN THE GOODY-WITCH.

"COLD BLOWS THE WIND" (Somersetshire Folk-Song).

"MADAM, WILL YOU WALK?" (do.).

"THE LASS OF RICHMOND HILL" (Old English).

"BOW DOWN" (Old English).

"WHAT ARE LITTLE BOYS MADE OF?" (Nursery Song)

"NEW WELLS" (Old English).

"MARJORIE DAW" (Nursery Song).

"GOSSIP JOAN" (Old English).

THE SCENES.

- I. OUTSIDE THE COTTAGE OF THE CHILDREN.
- II. THE FOREST.
- III. ANOTHER PART, NEAR THE GOODY-HOUSE.
- IV. THE COTTAGE AGAIN, SAME AS I.
- V. SAME AS III.

CHARACTERS.

THE GOODY-WITCH.

DAVY,
DOREEN, } *the children.*

OTTO, *a Prince in the Witch's power.*

BIG SISTER.

THE GOOD HUNTSMAN.

MEENA,
THORA, } *the Witch's captive children*
KARL,

THE WOODBIRD.

THE GOODY-WITCH.

SCENE I.—*Outside the Cottage. The little Apple-tree is growing before the door. In front of it is a bench on which DOREEN is sitting sewing. DAVY is learning his letters on a stool. BIG SISTER dressed for Market is standing C. between them.*

B. Sister. And so, children, I leave you. Remember all I have told you.

Dor. Yes, Big Sister.

Davy. Unless we forget.

B. Sister. Good children never forget their sister's parting advice.

Dor. I am sorry you must go away, Big Sister.

Davy. We know just what to do.

B. Sister. I am sorry to go, but it is only for three days, and old Grandmother in the town is so weak and ill.

Dor. Besides, you have the butter to sell.

Davy. Why cannot we come too? the Town is amusing.

B. Sister. Why, what would become of the Cottage if Doreen did not sweep it, or the little Apple-tree if you did not water it? No, no, you cannot come.

Dor. Besides, there is my seam, and Davy's spelling-book. We have so much to do.

B. Sister. Yes; finish your tasks like good children, and you are quite safe.

Davy [aside]. Safe!

B. Sister. In the garden, in the shade of the little Apple-tree, all will be well with you. And who knows, if you are very good, perhaps the Woodbird will come to build in the tree.

Dor. Ah, if he would!

B. Sister. But if the Apple-tree rustles, then beware; for danger approaches.

Davy [aside]. Danger!

Dor. I know what you mean, Big Sister;—the Goody-Witch!

B. Sister. Hush! yes. The black forest is about the Garden, and in the forest lies the Goody-Witch, always on the watch for naughty children.

Davy [boasting]. I am not afraid of her!

Dor. [sewing quietly] Nor am I.

B. Sister. My dears, I think you have no need.

[She sings, first to the tree, then to the children.]

Air—“Cold blows the wind” (or “Auld Lang Syne”).

Oh, Apple-tree, I leave them now,
Though I to stay am fain;
Protect them with your leafy bough
Till I come back again.

I planted you and fed you fair
With tears like drops of rain;
Oh take my children 'neath your care
Till I come back again.

And now farewell, my children dear,
Be good and so remain;
And I shall find you safely here
When I come back again.

[She kisses her hand and exit. The children sit in proper attitudes at their tasks for a while. Then DAVY looks up.

Davy. Doreen!

Dor. Yes, Davy.

Davy. Do you think it is true about the Goody-Witch?

Dor. Big Sister always tells the truth.

Davy. You are good, Doreen.

[A pause. DAVY yawns.

Dor. Shall I hear you your spelling?

Davy. I know the stuff.

Dor. *[taking book]* Spell bird.

Davy. B-i-r-d. Doreen, do you think it is true about the Woodbird?

Dor. Spell good.

Davy. G-o-o-d.

[He yawns over the last letter.

Dor. Spell naughty.

Davy. W-i-t-c-h.

Dor. Oh, Davy! You do not know your spelling yet.

[She hands back the book; DAVY lets it fall.

Davy. How much of that seam have you done?

Dor. *[measuring]* Nearly a yard.

Davy. I am going to see if those scarlet mushrooms are still growing by the forest path.

Dor. *[anxious]* Don't go outside the garden.

Davy. I know, silly.

[He goes. The tree shakes a little.

Dor. *[looking up]* Was that a breath of wind in the leaves? I hope it is not going to rain, or my needle will rust.

[DAVY comes back behind her seat and says "Bo" suddenly.
DOREEN jumps.

Dor. Oh, Davy! I have pricked my finger, and there is a little spot of red on Big Sister's sheet. [The tree rustles.

Davy. There are ever such lovely red mushrooms. I am just going a little way down the path to get them.

Dor. Oh, Davy, don't! Listen to the tree.

[The tree rustles. DAVY goes.

Davy [in the distance]. Oh, they are beauties.

Dor. [looking up at the tree] Can it be the wind? It is getting so dark, too; and was that thunder?

Davy [calls in the distance]. Doreen—Oh, Doreen There is ever such a funny old woman coming up the path.

Dor. [drops her work] Oh!

Davy. Doreen, she is selling sweets: such delicious goodies!

Dor. [rising to her feet] Ah!

Enter DAVY with a large sweet in his mouth.

Davy. She gave me one. It is so nice.

[The tree rustles furiously.

Enter GOODY-WITCH with a Sweet-tray.

Look at her. Isn't she a dear old woman?

G.-Witch. Good-day, my pretty mistress. Will you buy some sweeties this fine morning?

Dor. [drawing back] No. Go away.

G.-Witch. I am old, little mistress, and I have journeyed far. Let me rest under your pretty tree [tree rustles] and show you my wares,

Dor. Not to-day, thank you.

Davy. Doreen, what a silly you are! Come and look at the lovely things she is selling.

G.-Witch. Ah, little master, if you saw where they came from! These goodies are nothing but odd bits broken off.

Davy. Broken off what?

G.-Witch. My house.

Davy. A goody-house! Doreen, fancy!

G.-Witch. The windows are made of this [*she gives him a sweet*] and the doors of this [*same business*]. The beams I couldn't bring, or my house would have tumbled down.

Davy. Is your house far?

G.-Witch. Not too far for a brave boy to walk; only a fair bit along this path.

Davy. I should like to go.

Dor. Oh, Davy, Davy! Not into the dark wood!

Song, the GOODY-WITCH.

Air—"Madam, will you walk with me?"

Never you mind how dark the wood is,
I will give you the best of goodies;

Children, will you come and walk with me?

I will give you my cottage beams
All made out of chocolate creams.

Children, will you come, etc.

I will give you my cottage walls
All made up of brandy-balls.

Children, will you come, etc.

I will give you my cottage porch
All made out of butter-scotch.

Children, will you come, etc.

I will give you my chimney-tops
All made up of raspberry-drops.
Children, will you come, etc.

Davy [*sings*].

I don't care how dark the wood is,
All I want is the best of goodies,
Therefore I shall go—

Dor. [*holding him*] No, you shall not go—

Davy [*breaking away*]. Oh yes, I shall go—
[*to the GOODY-WITCH*] and walk with you!
[*DOREEN is left weeping by the tree.*

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE II.—*Part of the Forest. The GOOD HUNTS-*
MAN is discovered leaning against a tree. He smites
his brow.

G. Hunt. Alas! I am not myself since I met
that pretty lass going to market. I, that was
the merriest huntsman in all this greenwood,
am in love with a nameless maid.

Song, the GOOD HUNTSMAN.

Air—"The Lass of Richmond Hill."

Hard by this wood there lives a lass,
More bright then May-day morn,
Whose charms all other maids surpass,
A rose without a thorn.

Chorus.

This lass so neat, with smiles so sweet,
My manly heart can claim;
I'd crowns resign to call thee mine,
Sweet maid without a name!

Her stocking neat and dainty gown
The sternest heart would charm,
When she goes tripping to the town,
Her basket on her arm.

Chorus as before.

How happy would the Huntsman be
Who calls this maid his own!
O may her choice be fixed on me,
Mine's fixed on her alone.

Chorus as before.

DOREEN *enters crying.*

G. Hunt. What is the matter, little girl?

Dor. Oh dear, oh dear! Davy is lost and I am naughty.

G. Hunt. Naughty, are you? How is that?

Dor. Because I have left the Cottage empty, and I have run away into the black forest. So I have disobeyed Big Sister; and the Woodbird will never build in the little Apple-tree.

G. Hunt. Now, that is an odd thing; for I met the Woodbird not long since. And I was just going to shoot him dead with my big bow, thinking he was a thievish starling; but when I saw he was the Woodbird, I saved his life.

Dor. How did you know him?

G. Hunt. By the gold feather on his neck.

Dor. And what did he tell you?

G. Hunt. He said he had to go and build a nest for a good little girl, but if ever I had need of his help I had only to call him, and scatter some corn.

Dor. Oh, dear Huntsman, call him now, for perhaps he can tell us where Davy is.

G. Hunt. By all means. [*He calls "Woodbird,"* DOREEN scatters corn. *A whistle is heard.*] There he is. That means in his language "Who calls."

Song, GOOD HUNTSMAN and WOODBIRD.

Air—"Bow Down."

I

G. Hunt.

Oh, Woodbird, that liv'st in the highest tree
Fly down, fly down.
We're wishing to know where Davy can be.

Chorus [singing].

I have done good to the Woodbird
And the Woodbird does good unto me.

2

G. Hunt.

Oh, Davy is lost in the forest grim,
Doreen she is longing to rescue him.

Chorus (after each verse).

[*The WOODBIRD flies down.*]

3

Woodbird.

Oh, Huntsman, and how can I lend my aid
Unless Miss Doreen is a good little maid?

4

G. Hunt.

She's finished her seam of a whole yard
long,
And in loving her brother she does no
wrong.

5

Woodbird [approaches confidentially].

Not far from this by the forest path
The Goody-Witch her dwelling hath,

6

And there the naughty boy lies and eats,
For her captive children they feed him on
sweets.

7

G. Hunt.

And what will become of him, tell us that,
When stuffing has made him sufficiently
fat?

8

Woodbird.

I think she will have him for supper one
night,
And that I consider will serve him right.
[DOREEN falls on her knees weeping.

9

G. Hunt.

Oh, Woodbird, be kind to her, tell her
straight,
How he can be freed from this horrible
fate.

10

Woodbird.

She mustn't be greedy, she must be brave,
And serve for a time as the Witch's slave.

11

G. Hunt. and Dor.

She isn't afraid, and she straight will go.
Oh, thank you, dear Woodbird, we love
you so!

[DOREEN *embraces* WOODBIRD.
Exit WOODBIRD *flying*. *He*
leaves a feather.

Dor. [*kissing it*]. See, see! He has left me his golden feather.

G. Hunt. Keep it, it may be of use to you. Now, little maid, I must go.

Dor. And so must I. If you pass the Cottage, will you tell Big Sister where we are?

G. Hunt. That I will, and we will find money to ransom you.

Dor. Thank you, dear good Huntsman.

G. Hunt. Farewell, and be brave, little maid.
[*Exeunt in opposite directions*.

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE III.—*Forest near the GOODY-WITCH'S cottage.*
DAVY is discovered tied by a ribbon to a stake. He is listless and fat.

Davy. Well, I call this a fine life! doing nothing, and eating the best lollipops in the world all the day long. Silly little Doreen! She knows nothing about it. Sometimes I feel as if I should like to take her a sweet or two, and then I feel really too lazy to move. What ho, slaves!

[*Music heard. Enter WITCH'S captive children, beautifully dressed.*
OTTO leads them playing a pipe.

Meena [to Davy]. What do you want, strange boy? A sweet?

Davy. Not just yet. I want to be amused.

Thora. Shall we dance, strange boy?

Davy. That will do.

Karl. Will you dance with us?

Davy [*yawning*]. Not to-day.

Karl [*to others*]. The strange boy is getting too fat to dance: Mistress will be pleased.

Meena. Otto must dance, then.

Otto. No, I will play.

Thora. Not on the fairy-pipe then, or we shall never be able to stop.

[*Dance.* DAVY sleeps. At the end the GOODY-WITCH enters, and the Dancers bow to her.

G.-Witch. Aha, my pretty dears! you are gay.

Meena. The strange boy bade us dance, Mistress.

G.-Witch. Ay, ay—but what of your work?

Thora. We have fed him, Mistress.

Karl. Till he can eat no more.

G.-Witch [*feeling* DAVY]. Nonsense, boys can always eat more sweets. Fetch some from my cottage. [*Exeunt children.* OTTO lingers.

G.-Witch. And you, little sluggard. You had better go too. Dost hear?

[OTTO goes, with a haughty look.

G.-Witch [*alone, standing over* DAVY]. Ah, what a tit-bit he will be. Never did I have such a greedy, lazy, naughty boy. So much the better. No good boy ever has the flavour of a naughty one.

Ah! [*She smacks her lips.* DAVY wakes.] Well, pretty master, ready for your dinner?

Davy [*stretching*]. If it is something really good.

G.-Witch. Ah, so good, so good.

Re-enter four children.

Meena. Mistress, he has eaten all the Cottage furniture.

G.-Witch. What, the Chocolate chairs?

Meena. Yes!

G.-Witch. The Toffee tables?

Thora. Yes!

G.-Witch. The Barley-sugar beds?

Karl. Yes!

G.-Witch. Dear, dear! Well, you must begin upon the walls; but *carefully*, children. Come, I will show you how to break off bits.

[Exeunt GOODY-WITCH and all the children except OTTO.]

Davy. Is that you, Otto?

Otto. Yes, Davy.

Davy. Why do you not go and get me sweets with the others?

Otto. Why should I?

Davy. It's your business. The Goody-Witch will punish you if you don't.

Otto. I don't care. I am too unhappy.

[He sighs.]

Davy [*virtuous*]. Well, I never saw such a lazy boy.

Otto. Didn't you, Davy?

Davy. I suppose you want to make up to me, and get some of my sweets. I never saw anyone so greedy.

Otto. Didn't you, Davy?

Davy. And so selfish, too. But you won't get any, I can tell you!

Otto. I would not eat them.

Davy. They are delicious.

Otto. Perhaps, but they are poison all the

same. Every sweet you eat brings you more completely under the Witch's power.

Davy. What rubbish!

Otto. Yet every sweet you eat increases your desire for more. Oh, Davy, they are dangerous!

Davy. You mean to say you have never eaten one?

Otto. Not one. That is why she has less power over me than the other children.

Davy. Has she?

Otto. Have you not noticed? She can command me, she cannot compel.

Davy. Then how came you here at all?

Otto. She carried me off.

Davy. Why?

Otto. She hated my Mother.

Davy. Who is your Mother?

Otto. Hush! [*He looks round.*] My mother is a Queen. Oh, do not talk of her. See, who is this?

DOREEN enters.

Dor. Davy, Davy, I have found you!

Davy. Oh, bother! [*To OTTO*] Go on with your story; it amuses me. Do you mean that your Mother is a real Queen?

Dor. Davy! Don't you know me?

Davy. I know you are a bother.

Dor. Oh, Davy, you are unkind! [*She cries.*]

Otto. Who is she?

Davy. My sister Doreen. I suppose she has come after the sweets, too; sneaking little thing!

Otto [*to DOREEN*]. Don't cry, little girl; don't mind him. 'Tis not he that speaks, but the Witch's foul enchantment holding him.

Dor. Oh, what shall I do? Hark!

[*The children are heard singing off.*

Otto. Do as I do:—resist her. Help me to be brave.

[*They stand side by side.*

Dor. What is that sound of crying I hear?

Otto. Crying? They are singing merrily. See, there they all come out of the Goody-Witch's house.

Dor. Is that her house, that poor little hovel of sticks?

Otto. Sticks? It is all built of clear transparent sugar. And here comes the Goody-Witch herself.

Dor. Ah, what a hateful old hook-nosed hag!

Otto. Why, she always looks a kind enough old Goody. What is that you are holding? A golden feather?

Dor. It is the Woodbird's.

Otto. Let me hold it. [*He takes it and looks off.*] Why, Doreen, you are right! I see nothing but a horrid old hag, surrounded by wailing children.

Enter WITCH and Children. They hand trays of sweets.

Song, Children.

Air—“What are little boys made of?”

What's the Witch's house made of?

Sugar and spice and all that's nice

That's what her house is made of.

[*They hand to DAVY who takes sweets.*

Otto and Dor. (sing).

What's the Witch's house made of?

Cunning tricks and ugly old sticks,

That's what her house is made of.

[*OTTO and DOREEN refuse the sweets.*

G.-Witch. Do I see our pretty little visitor refusing to taste? Come, come: see these delicious burnt almonds and ice-cream!

Dor. I only see a trayful of musty fir-cones!

[GOODY-WITCH *scowls*.

G.-Witch. Well, my darling, try these sweet apples.

Dor. I only see poisonous red toadstools!

[GOODY-WITCH *growls*.

G.-Witch. My slave-children, here is a rude little girl. Come and scratch her to death.

Children. We can't, we can't! They hold the Woodbird's golden feather.

Otto [*holding feather between them*]. Keep off!

Dor. You cannot touch us.

[GOODY-WITCH *shrinks back*.

G.-Witch. Well, go along if you must. I want no good children here.

Dor. I want my brother Davy. I will not go without him.

G.-Witch. Ha, ha! Call him, then!

Dor. Davy, Davy! [*DAVY turns his head lazily*.] Davy, come home!

Davy. What's home?

Dor. Home is where Big Sister is, and the Cottage, and the little Apple-tree.

G.-Witch. And the spelling-book, eh?

Davy. Horrid old spelling! I am happier here. [*He snores*.

G.-Witch. You see? Ah, he is a fine fat boy. Three days more and he will be ready for the pot.

Dor. Can nothing save him?

G.-Witch. Nothing, unless it were his weight

in solid gold. Ha, ha! Now I am going in for my mid-day nap.

[*Exit* GOODY-WITCH to Cottage, MEENA, THORA, and KARL follow.]

Dor. His weight in gold? Otto, what shall we do?

Otto. It is hopeless.

Dor. Big Sister often says I am worth my weight in gold. I would gladly give myself.

Otto. But you are light and small, Doreen, and look how fat and heavy Davy is.

Dor. How could we get him thin?

Otto. Suppose we made him dance? Then perhaps he would grow thinner.

Dor. He is too sleepy to dance.

Otto. Wait a moment; I have a fairy pipe that my fairy-godmother gave me. He will never be able to resist that.

[OTTO plays. The children come stealing in.]

Children. Oh, Otto, how you play!

Davy [*awaking slowly*]. What is that? What music! I must dance!

Meena. Dance with me.

[The six children dance vigorously, OTTO playing.]

[Curtain.]

SCENE IV.—*Same as Scene I.* BIG SISTER enters from the Cottage.

B. Sister. Alas, alas, what shall I do? I have returned from town to find the Cottage unswept, the Apple-tree unwatered, and the

children gone. Oh dear, oh dear, I am afraid they have been naughty.

[She sinks on seat, and covers her face.]

Enter HUNTSMAN.

Hunt. [*aside*] What? The lady of my love—my unknown maid! And weeping, too,—I must console her.

B. Sister. What is this? Davy's spelling-book, all torn and crumpled. Ah, it is as I feared. Yet stay, here is Doreen's seam: unfinished, of course—the naughty child! Why, no, it is finished. Yes, and the cotton nicely fastened off; even stitches and a straight hem; perhaps there is still hope after all.

G. Hunt. [*advancing*] Good-morrow, fair Unknown!

B. Sister [*aside*]. Ah, 'tis surely the Good Huntsman. Sir, have we not met before?

G. Hunt. On the way to town. I hope you have had good fortune there.

B. Sister [*producing a bag-purse*]. Very. I have sold all my butter for a good price, and I have visited poor old Grandmother who is so weak and ill.

G. Hunt. Then you should laugh, not weep.

B. Sister. But Davy and Doreen, my dear children, are lost!

G. Hunt. [*aside, striking his brow*] Why, it must be my little maid's Big Sister. This is indeed good fortune.

B. Sister. I left them in charge of the little Apple-tree.

[She looks up at it; it waves slightly.]

G. Hunt. Fair Unknown, a tree cannot do much.

B. Sister. It can rustle; and see, it has shaken its leaves all over the ground. How dreadfully naughty they must have been! I fear the Goody-Witch has got them.

G. Hunt. I *know* she has.

B. Sister. Good Huntsman, help me to rescue them.

G. Hunt. I will do my best.

[*A Bird's trill is heard.*]

B. Sister. Hush, what is that?

G. Hunt. Why, it is the Woodbird. Wait!

[*He approaches tree.*]

B. Sister. What are you looking at?

G. Hunt. I see a nest up there.

B. Sister. What, in our tree? No! Then somebody must have been good after all.

G. Hunt. Doreen is good.

B. Sister. Do you know her?

G. Hunt. I met her down in the wood. She has given herself up to the Goody-Witch for Davy's sake.

B. Sister. Alas, my poor babies! How can we save them?

G. Hunt. I know the Goody-Witch; she is greedy for gold.

B. Sister. But we are so poor.

G. Hunt. I have my savings. [*Produces bag.*]

B. Sister. If it comes to that, I have the butter money.

G. Hunt. It may be enough.

B. Sister. Let us go at once, Good Huntsman.

G. Hunt. Wait a moment! [*He climbs on the seat and feels in the nest.*] Yes, it is as I thought. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven eggs! And all of solid gold! [*He takes one out.*] It is the Woodbird's gift to Doreen.

B. Sister. Ah, kind Woodbird!

G. Hunt. We will take them with us. Lend me your butter-basket, fair Unknown. Seven large eggs must needs be enough.

B. Sister. Stop!

G. Hunt. Why, what is the matter?

B. Sister [*firmly*]. You must not take all.

G. Hunt. Why not?

B. Sister. You *must* leave one for the bird.

G. Hunt. Ah, you are right! [*Troubled.*]
But suppose six are not enough?

B. Sister. No matter. We must not steal the poor Woodbird's last egg.

[*G. HUNT. steps down. The WOODBIRD sings.*]

B. Sister. See, it is sunset—the lovely golden light.

G. Hunt. And hark, there is his song.

B. Sister. His song of gratitude.

G. Hunt. It will soon be dark and the forest is very black. Shall we not wait till to-morrow?

B. Sister. Nay, nay, it is three days since they went. To-morrow may be too late.

G. Hunt. That is true [*she takes his arm*], we will go together.

Duet, HUNTSMAN and BIG SISTER.

Air—"New Wells."

Now the setting sun
Veils his light before us,
With declining ray
Sinking in the west;
Now his course is done,
Night is coming o'er us.

All the toil of day
Is turned to rest.

[WOODBIRD *sings during Symphony.*

Soft the twilight falls
Over wood and meadows,
All across the sky
Stars begin to peep.
Soft the Woodbird calls
Through the gathering shadows,
Soon will close each eye
And fall asleep.

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE V.—*Same as III. A See-saw across a log at the back. A small fire and smoking pot. The three children, MEENA, THORA, and KARL, see-saw at the back and sing. Meanwhile OTTO and DOREEN are stuffing DAVY'S tunic with straw down L. to make him look fat.*

Song, MEENA, THORA, and KARL.

Air—"Marjorie Daw."

See-saw, pig in the straw,
Soon to be pig on a platter!
When the water is hot
He'll be boiled in the pot,
Because he won't grow any fatter.

[*Repeat.*

[OTTO and DOREEN *sing as they stuff DAVY.*
See-saw, stuff him with straw,
Davy is really much thinner,
But little she'll know,
When we stuff him out so,
He'll never be eaten for dinner.

[*Children repeat.*

Otto. There, Davy. Now the Goody-Witch will think you as fat as ever!

Davy. But I don't want to be boiled for her dinner!

Otto. Don't be afraid. When she finds how thin you really are with dancing to my fairy pipe, she will not think of eating you.

Davy. But she may boil me all the same.

[Points to the pot.

Doreen. No, Davy. She shall kill me before you.

Davy. You *are* good, Doreen. Oh dear, I wish I had been good.

Otto. Hush, here comes the Goody-Witch. Lie down in the straw and keep still.

GOODY-WITCH *enters.*

G.-Witch. Well, children, is my little pig ready? Ah, how nice and plump he looks! *[She pokes DAVY.]* The water is nearly boiling. Thora, bring me my knife and fork! *[A huge knife and fork are brought.]* Ha, ha! little pig!

[MEENA pokes the fire while GOODY-WITCH sings.

Song, GOODY-WITCH.

Air—"Gossip Joan."

Boil, boil, my kettle boil,
And poke the fire, my slavey!
And turn and help me all my crew
For to prepare a lovely stew—
A stew composed of Davy!
Boil, boil, boil!

Boil, boil, my kettle boil,
And make a nice hot gravy,
And drop in herbs and onions, too,
To make it worthy of my stew—
My stew composed of Davy!
Boil, boil, boil!

*Enter GOOD HUNTSMAN and BIG SISTER,
disguised as poor peasants.*

G. Hunt. Good dame, have you any pigs to sell?

G.-Witch. [*aside*] Ha, who are these?— Good friends, I have a fat little pig, but I want him for dinner myself.

B. Sister. Good dame, we are starving. Prithce sell your pig to us; he looks so nice and fat.

G.-Witch. Well, well, you can have him, only you must give me my price.

G. Hunt. And what is the price?

G.-Witch. His weight in purest gold. Ha, ha!

B. Sister and G. Hunt. His weight!

[*They look at one another.*]

Dor. [*to OTTO*] Oh, Otto, I know them though they are disguised. It is my Big Sister and the Good Huntsman. [*She steps forward.*]

B. Sister [*aside*]. Doreen!

G. Hunt. Who is this little girl?

G.-Witch. She is my servant, and the best I ever had, though she has only been with me three days.

G. Hunt. Is she clever?

G.-Witch. Clever? You should see her seams! And her darning! You should taste

her puddings! And her stews! She is worth her weight in gold!

B. Sister [*who has whispered to DOREEN*]. Very well then, dame. This little girl is mine. Put the pig at one end of the See-saw and Doreen at the other. If she weighs him down, the pig will be ours.

[BIG SISTER *throws off her cloak*: so does GOOD HUNTSMAN.

G.-Witch. Ha, ha, fools! Little you know how heavy my little pig is. Try and see.

[GOOD HUNTSMAN and GOODY-WITCH *lift DAVY and carry him to the See-saw*.

G.-Witch. [*disappointed*] He is not half as heavy as I thought! Why, what is this?

[*She pulls out straw*: DAVY is thin.

Children. Ha, ha! What a joke! He is thin all the time!

[DOREEN *sits on the other end of the See-saw*.

G.-Witch. Not enough! Ho, ho! fools!

G. Hunt. Here are my earnings!

[*Puts bag by DOREEN*.

B. Sister. And my butter money! [*ditto*].

G.-Witch. Not enough! Hee, hee! fools!

G. Hunt. Here are the Woodbird's six golden eggs.

[*He puts them in DOREEN'S lap. The plank tilts slightly*.

G.-Witch. Still not enough. Hoo hoo! Not enough by a featherweight!

G. Hunt. Ah, if we had that other egg!

Otto. A featherweight, did she say? Here is the Woodbird's golden feather.

All the Children. Hurrah!

[DOREEN'S *end of the See-saw goes down. There is a crash of falling timber, and the GOODY-WITCH vanishes with a shriek.*

Otto. The Goody-house has fallen down!

Meena. The Goody-Witch has vanished.

All. We are saved!

[DAVY and DOREEN embrace BIG SISTER, one on each side.

Otto. Doreen's Big Sister, and you, Good Huntsman, I thank you both for us all. If you will come home with me to my father's palace, we will have a great merry-making.

G. Hunt. To celebrate my marriage.—

B. Sister. And the Prince's return.

Otto. Now, who will pipe for us all to dance?

The WOODBIRD enters.

Woodbird. I will, my young Prince. My golden egg is hatched, and there is a new little Woodbird to keep watch over Doreen and Davy's cottage, and to sing night and morn in the little Apple-tree.

Dor. Dear Woodbird—and you?

Woodbird. I am a bird of passage. For wherever good children are to be found [*and I hope I see many before me*] I must be there to protect them from evil, and to lay them eggs of gold!

[*A General Dance. BIG SISTER and HUNTSMAN — DOREEN and OTTO—MEENA and DAVY—THORA and KARL. The WOODBIRD pipes.*

[*Curtain.*]

THE GOOSEGIRL.

[AFTER GRIMM.]

NOTES.

Fustian must be able to sing well : Felina and Swanbild must sing a little.

Flurribel, if necessary, may be doubled with Aquila, but the difference of character must then be emphasised.

Falada's voice, speaking and singing, is, of course, throughout that of his master Fustian.

Curdkin's hat can be made to fly off with an invisible thread.

FOLK-SONGS USED.

"IT WAS A MAID" (Old English).

"OVER THE SEA TO SKYE" (Scottish).

"KITTY BAWN" (Irish).

"LADY GREENSLEEVES" (Old English).

"SCOTS, WHA HAE" (Scottish).

"THE HARP THAT ONCE" (Irish).

"OFT IN THE STILLY NIGHT" (Irish).

"FELTON'S GAVOTTE" (or "FAREWELL, MANCHESTER")
(Old English).

THE SCENES.

- I. THE COURT OF QUEEN FLURRIBEL.
- II. A WELL BY THE WAYSIDE.
- III. THE COURT OF EUGENE AND AQUILA.
- IV. OUTSIDE THE CITY WALL.

CHARACTERS.

QUEEN FLURRIBEL.

SWANHILD, *her daughter.*

FELINA, *a maid.*

QUEEN AQUILA, *sister to Flurribel.*

PRINCE EUGENE, *her son.*

FUSTIAN, *an old iester.*

FALADA, *his hobby-horse.*

THE VORHERR VON UTTER, *a nobleman of Eugene's
suite.*

CURDKIN, *a gooseherd.*

THE GOOSEGIRL.

SCENE I.—*The Court of QUEEN FLURRIBEL, a boudoir.*
FLURRIBEL discovered reclining R. in untidy *négligée*, sipping tea. A window behind her. A looking-glass down L.

Flur. This tea is quite cold. What is the good of being a queen if they bring you cold tea. Oh dear, these servants! [*Calls.*] Felina!

FELINA enters L. carrying a huge envelope.

Felina, this tea is cold.

Fel. I am concerned, madam. I hotted it three times, but each time your Majesty dozed off before you drank it. Shall I hot it once again?

Flur. [*cowed*] No, no; never mind. Oh dear, Felina, how tidy you look. Quite smart, I declare. What's the time?

Fel. Madam, almost eleven.

Flur. Eleven? Oh, mercy! Wasn't I to see somebody at eleven?

Fel. [*coldly*] The Royal Audience is timed to commence at that hour.

Flur. Yes, that's what I mean. Is anybody waiting?

Fel. An Ambassador, madam, has brought this. [*Presents letter.*]

Flur. Never! For me? Whose Ambassador?

Fel. From Prince Eugene.

Flur. My sister's boy. My darling Aquila's little pet.

Fel. Madam, Prince Eugene is a person of distinction—a Power; sole ruler of seven kingdoms.

Flur. I know: of course. I wonder what he wants. [*She tries clumsily to open letter. To FELINA, who helps her*] Oh, thanks. Don't you wonder, Felina, what it can be about?

Fel. [*aside*] No, I don't.

[*She straightens her cap at glass L.*

Flur. Felina! What do you think?

Fel. [*her hands clasped*] Speak, madam!

Flur. Ha, ha, I never! He wants to marry Swanhild! To marry her!

Fel. Princess Swanhild, madam, is marriageable.

Flur. I daresay. But I never thought Eugene would look at her. What I mean is, he has had such a different kind of education: and then look at his fortune! He might have anybody. And here he turns to his poor little cousin, who played with him last at six years old! [*Wipes eyes.*] I call it pretty of him!

Fel. [*aside*] The great Eugene to that brat! I wish I had her luck. [*To FLURRIBEL*] Who could better merit Fortune's smiles than our loved Princess?

Flur. How nicely you put things, Felina. You are so clever, you must go along with Swanhild to my sister's court, when she is to be married. Promise me, won't you now?

Fel. I would go to the world's end with my sweet Princess!

Flur. Well, now, I must bustle. Will this cap do?

Fel. Certainly not, madam. The young man who has been sent is most gentlemanlike.

Flur. Then I had better wear my jewelled circlet. [*FELINA puts it round her cap.*] What's his name?

Fel. The Vorherr von Utter, madam. [*Aside*] And he looks it.

Flur. [*fussing*] There now, I suppose I must scribble an answer. Or had Swanhild better? Her spelling has improved. In fact, it is better than mine.

Fel. If I, madam, wrote a letter to your dictation—as though it came from the Princess. [*Waits.*] Anything simple and girlish would serve. [*Aside*] The time the woman takes over the simplest thing!

Flur. [*inspired*] Dear Eugene!—Will that do?

Fel. [*prompting and writing*] Dearest Eugene, Mamma says you want me to come and be your little queen. You used to say I should be, when I was six and you were ten. But I never thought you would keep your word. But Mamma says great kings always do! So I will come as soon as I have packed my box. With best love to Aunt Aquila. Your loving cousin, Swanhild.

Flur. Oh yes. The very thing. How well you write, Felina, so quick and twirly! Have you finished?

Fel. Yes, madam. It is signed [*glances at her*] and addressed. [*Hands letter to her.*] It needs but be sealed.

Flur. [*glancing at it doubtfully*] Hadn't Swanhild better just——

Fel. [*loud, clasp ing hands*] Why, here comes our sweet Princess!

Enter SWANHILD with flowers L.

Swan. Why, Mamma, you are up. [*Kisses her.*] Oh, there is such a funny young man waiting in the hall. A dandy, I should think. You never saw anything like his hair—and his eye-glass.

Flur. I hope, love, he did not see *your* hair. It's so untidy. Oh, thank you, Felina.

[*FELINA tidies SWANHILD.*

Swan. He was much too short-sighted to see me. Oh, don't, Felina. [*She shrinks.*] I cannot bear your hands on me. [*She shivers.*

Flur. You must make the best of your hair, darling, and eyes, and everything, *now*. I have to break it to you, pet, that Eugene has—well, in fact, he has proposed.

Swan. [*arranging flowers in a vase C.*] Proposed? What, Mamma?

[*FELINA bursts into a titter.*

Fel. Excuse me, madam. Her Highness is so sweetly innocent.

[*SWANHILD looks at her, then at her mother.*

Swan. Marry him, you mean? Oh, Mamma! Why, he has not seen me since I was six. Twelve years! How can he know I shan't be quite different?

Fel. [*down L. to audience*] That's true. How can he? Ahem!

Flur. That reminds me. We will put in a portrait, Felina. Find a nice one of the Princess, and slip it inside.

Swan. [*quickly*] Inside what?

Flur. Our acceptance, dearest. Of course

we accept. You'll never get a better offer. Seven kingdoms! Besides, I thought you liked him.

Swan. I do. Eugene was a dear at ten years old—only he never would allow I could beat him at marbles. Still—may I see what you have said, Mamma?

Fel. [*softly*] The Vorherr von Utter is in a hurry to get back. [*Glances out at window.*] I doubt if he'll wait long.

Flur. [*fussing*] Oh dear, oh dear. My seal, Felina. [*She seals letter.*] He must not think us ungrateful, or—Swanhild, darling, be nice to him, for Mummy's sake. Oh dear, wait a minute, Felina. We must have some attendance. Is Fustian there?

Fel. [*haughty*] Does your Majesty mean the old jester?

Flur. He's better than nothing. Fustian!

Enter FUSTIAN, shambling. He clasps FALADA, and takes his place at back. Exit FELINA L.

Oh dear, Fustian, what a shabby coat. Do hold up your head; and do try and be bright. I am sure the jester at my sister's Court is bright.

Fust. [*shaking his head sadly*] I be dull, I be dull. [*Suddenly cheerful.*] But never mind; there's always my horse Falada.

[SWANHILD laughs.]

Flur. Oh, Swanhild, why does he carry that silly toy about? What will the Vorherr think?

Swan. It is his hobby, Mamma, Falada. Falada is all the cleverest part of Fustian. Falada can sing, and talk in riddles, and be witty and wise. Whereas poor old Fustian!—

Fust. Poor old Fusty-musty-rusty.

[*Shakes his head.*

Swan. Won't Falada sing us a song now,
Fustian, while we wait? Do ask him.

[*FUSTIAN sings, after comic colloquy
with FALADA.*

Air—"It was a maid of my countrie."

It was a mouse so sleek and fat,
That met a pretty pussy-cat,
And rode abroad with her one day,
In quite a friendly kind of way.

At last she askèd of the cat,
"How came the folk to tell me that
You were a monstrous kind of beast?
You do not seem to be, the least."

And then the cat replied to her,
"You've only seen me when I purr;
But when I use my claws and scratch,
I'm sorry for the mouse I catch."

You're sorry, Puss, and so am I,
For I believe that mouse will die,
So here's some good advice, and that's
To keep an eye on *Pussy-cats*.

[*Finish tune down to keynote.*

Swan. What a funny song. What does it mean?

Fust. Aha! Ask Falada. I be dull.

Swan. We have no pussy-cats here—[*glances
at door*] unless——

[*FELINA glides in elaborately.*

Fel. [*soft*] The Vorherr von Utter!

Enter UTTER, strutting.

Utter. Madam [*peers about and tries to fix eye-glass*]. Your Majesty—ladies,—your servant!
[*He bows vaguely round.*]

Flur. Your Vorherrschaft is welcome to our Court. [*Presenting*] My daughter the Princess Swanhild.

[*UTTER bows to FELINA.*]

Clear those things off the chair, Felina. There, I can't be formal. Sit down and let's be comfortable together.

Utter [*taken aback*]. Wh-what? Hey?

[*His eyeglass drops, and he staggers into a chair, blinking. During the pause, FELINA coughs, FLURRIBEL signs to her and she goes huffily out L.*]

Swan. [*gently*] I hope my cousin Eugene is quite well.

Utter [*jumps up and bows, feeling for eye-glass*]. Fairest Highness—[Where is that glass?]
—I left the Prince in a fever.

Flur. What? Poor boy, is it measles?

Utter. A fever of impatience, madam, for her Highness's—er—response, to his—ah—petition.

Flur. [*pleased*] Oh yes. You hear, Swanhild? [*Nudges her, then to UTTER, in a whisper with nods*] It's all right, you know. You can tell him, poor boy. [*She shows him the letter.*]

Utter [*takes it with elegant bow*]. Ah, what rapture for his Majesty. [*Rises tiptoe*] Lend—oh lend me wings to bear the happy news!

Flur. I'm afraid we haven't got any—so sorry. [*Aside to SWANHILD*] He talks as

pretty as a book. Come now, Fustian, it's your turn. Show what our Court can do. Be bright, do you hear?

Fust. Nay, nay, I be dull. But Falada may have a notion.

Song, FUSTIAN with FALADA.

Air—"Over the sea to Skye."

Speed, bonny lord, like a bird on the wing,
Swift as a horse may ride,
Carry the tidings sweet to the King,
Swanhild will be his bride.

[*Dialogue in dumb show with FALADA.*
She will be Queen—[*to FAL.*] what do you mean

Why do you shake your head?
Fortune shines bright—[*to FAL.*] isn't that right?

What have I gone and said?

Speed, bonny lord, etc.

Eugene and she, married will be,—

[*To FAL.*] Nonsense, you must be wrong!
Radiant their lot, absolute—[*to FAL.*] what?
[*Knocking his head on the floor*] There, you have spoilt my song!

Speed, bonny lord, etc.

[*Galloping on FALADA.*

Utter [*eyeglass up*]. Hum, peculiar. Our musicians will do better than that, I trust. Well, then, fair ladies, I go before to speed the happy news.

Flur. Oh yes. We only want time to get her a few frocks. Then she and her train will set out.

Swan. [*aside*] My train! [*Looking round.*] Where is it?

Flur. I wish I could come myself, tell Eugene. However, my confidential maid will look after her.

Swan. [*aside*] Felina!

Utter. Her Highness will be met on our frontier, madam, as becomes a Royal Bride.

Flur. Thank you, that's capital. Good-bye. Fustian, see his Vorherrschaft out.

Utter. Madam—ladies.

[*Elaborate bow. Exit UTTER with FUSTIAN.*]

Flur. [*to SWANHILD*] Darling! [*Embrace.*] Well, well, we must think about your trousseau.

Swan. [*nervously*] Mamma dear, can't I take some other maid? You—you depend so upon Felina. I couldn't——

Flur. It's just *because* I depend so on her, lovey, that I send her. Besides, Felina always *looks* so well, she is worth a dozen.

Re-enter FELINA, followed by FUSTIAN staggering with a box.

Why, what is that, Felina? The Ambassador's luggage?

Fel. [*to FUSTIAN*] Give the message to her Majesty, can't you.

Fust. [*sets down box and scratches head*] He left it—for her.

[*Points with his thumb to SWANHILD.*]

Flur. A wedding present! Dear Eugene, what foresight!

[*Three ladies gather round box and look at label.*]

All. [*awestruck*] Paris!

Flur. Felina, undo the string.

[*FELINA unpacks fine clothes amid exclamation.*

Flur. Swanhild, you must positively try it on. Or wait, we shall see it better if Felina tries it.

[*SWANHILD gives up robe to FELINA unwillingly. FELINA sweeps about in it.*

Flur. Beautiful! Why, Felina, you look fit to be a bride yourself. Doesn't she, Swanhild?

Swan. Yes, she does. [*Wipes a tear.*

Flur. My pet, what is it?

Swan. I don't care for the dresses, Mamma. I d-don't want to leave you.

Fel. [*aside*] Pooh, little humbug!

Flur. You want your dinner, dearest. That's what it is. After dinner you will feel quite different. Felina, carry the box into the ante-room. [*Exit FELINA.*

Swan. Cannot you come with me, Mamma?

Flur. How can I? There is the ruling of the country to be done, after all. [*Cheerfully.*] And you're quite a big girl now.

Swan. Then let me have Fustian. Dear old Fusty would be homelike.

Flur. [*doubtful*] Very well, if Felina does not mind him. And now see, dearest, since Felina is out of hearing—[*FELINA peeps round door*] here is a priceless treasure to take with you, a lock of your poor dear Papa's hair. It possesses a power to keep you safe from harm. Guard it carefully, or you may come to ill.

Swan. Oh, thank you, dear Mamma. Now I do feel better.

[*She kisses lock and hides it in her breast.*

Flur. That's right, love. Now do come to dinner and let's be comfy.

Swan. Oh yes, just in your cap.

[*She takes off FLURRIBEL'S crown and leaves it on the couch. Exeunt together. Then enter FELINA, stealing cat-like, still in the gorgeous robe. She goes to mirror, tries on FLURRIBEL'S crown and turns before it, admiring herself.*]

Fel. Ha, the clothes settle it! It's worth attempting for the clothes alone. My mind is made up. Ah, how well that crown becomes my classical profile. I will have a crown, or die.

FUSTIAN enters—stares—and suddenly begins to sing.

Fust. And then the cat replied to her,
You've only seen me when I purr——

Fel. What are you doing here, you old scarecrow, eh? I'll teach you to come prying in the Queen's apartments.

Fust. 'Twasn't me, 'twasn't me! 'Twas Falada.

[*She chases him round and out, protesting "'Twas Falada!"*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE II.—*A well by the wayside L. A sign-post in background.*

Enter FUSTIAN R., galloping on FALADA.

Fust. Holà, holà,—Woh! [*Pulls up FALADA.*]
We're well in front of the ladies, Falada. Poor things, their horses don't go near so fast as

mine. Why, here's a pretty spring of water. Falada shall have a drink. [*Business.*] Now we will rest ourselves till they come up. [*Attitude.*] You know, Falada, they are nice ladies, those two—but one of them—ouf! She tells me this and she tells me that, till my head—oh dear! [*He holds his head.*] Now listen to me: *one* of those two is the Princess; but which? Now and again my head gets tangled. But *you* know, Falada, you are so bright. *You* know which is the Princess, don't you? Ah, I thought so. [*He sighs relieved.*] Bubble, babble, plish, plash: hark to the brook. Let us sing a song to the brook until they come up.

Song, FUSTIAN.

Air—"Kitty Bawn" (or "Oge Asthore").

Babbling brook have you seen her pass,
Have you set eyes on my lady Swan?
Call her to rest on your velvet grass,
Call to her quick ere she wander on.

Light is her foot as your snow-white foam,
Bright is her eye as your waters are;
She has come wandering far from home,—
Call to her quick ere she go too far.

[*Repeat first verse, ad. lib.*]

Enter SWANHILD rapidly R., looking behind her.

Swan. Oh, Fustian,—oh, dear Fusty, there you are. [*She runs to him.*]

Fust. [*nodding*] Here we be, my lady Swan.

Swan. Is she coming? Oh, Fustian, I am so afraid of her. I only wanted to drink. I heard the stream, and I was so thirsty. But she would have me ride on. Twice over it happened.

The third time the stream called so loud I could bear it no longer, and had to come.

Fust. Ha, ha! That was Falada singing with the stream.

Swan. But oh, I fear her! First she took my horse, because she said I was too tall for it. Then she took my gold whip, because she said it was too heavy for me. Now I think she means to starve me, for she eats all the food. I may not even drink, you see, only I slipped away.

Fust. Well, it is good water.

Swan. I must taste it. [*She stoops to drink out of her hand, then rising again she gives a cry.*] Oh, catch it, save it! It has dropped into the water.

Fust. What?

Swan. My lock—my father's hair. Alas, it is lost, it is lost! [*She weeps.*]

Enter FELINA R. with a bundle.

Fel. 'Tis as I thought, we are close to the frontier. A peasant girl passing told me. The Vorherr and his escort cannot be far away, for she had seen the soldiers. [*Impatiently*] Do you hear? What are you crying for, little fool?

Swan. [*rising*] Felina, you forget yourself.

Fel. Do I? Ha, ha! Forget who I am,—eh, madam? Well, you know, I never could remember who I was. [*Turns to FUSTIAN*] Who am I, eh?

Fust. [*looking wild*] Can't say. I be dull.

Fel. [*fiercely*] Your mistress, eh?

Fust. [*cowed*] Yes, yes. But—but th—that is the Princess. [*Points with thumb.*]

Fel. Where? That?

[Looks contempt at SWANHILD, who has sunk down again by the brook. FUSTIAN peers at her troubled and shakes his head. FELINA goes up to SWANHILD and shakes her by the shoulder, while FUSTIAN retires R. clasp- ing FALADA.]

Fel. Come, now, we must get on.

Swan. I am so thirsty and so hot, Felina.

Fel. Well, I have been thinking that furred gown was too hot for you. Listen, you had better change.

Swan. Change? What mean you?

Fel. This is what I mean. Take off that feathered cap and mantle. *[She seizes them.]* Here are some clothes I bought of the peasant-girl who showed us the way. Go behind that rock and put them on. Go! *[Stamps.]*

Swan. My lock! My lost lock! Oh, woe is me!

[She lifts her hands and exit down R.]

FELINA attires herself in the royal dress.

Fel. Ha, ha, at last! *[She looks in water.]* The water is as good as a looking-glass. Ah, how well I look. *[Simpers.]* Dear Eugene, how pleased he will be to find that I have grown up so handsome.

Song, FELINA.

Air—"Lady Greensleeves."

At last Felina has got her chance

To make her fortune most gloriously:

For a lady's maid 'tis a little advance

To be Queen over seven kingdoms!

For oh, a crown it is my delight,
And oh, a crown will become me quite!
A diamond crown it is better than gold
For a Queen over seven kingdoms!

I ever did manage to be genteel
And to hold my head up respectably,
But I never thought I should live to feel
I was Queen over seven kingdoms.
For oh, a crown it is my delight, etc.
[*With stepdance to chorus.*]

Re-enter SWANHILD in peasant dress with a close cap.

Swan. [*hands clasped*] Felina!

Fel. [*curtseying*] Ha, ha, how do you like me?
Allow me to present Prince Eugene's bride, the
Princess Swanhild.

Swan. If you think this imposture will not
be discovered——!

Fel. Who should discover it?

Swan. I will tell everybody.

Fel. Who will believe you?

Swan. I will tell Eugene.

Fel. He has not seen you for twelve years.
He will take me gladly—my dear Prince!

Swan. He has my portrait.

Fel. Pardon me, he has mine. I enclosed the
prettiest I possessed in the letter I wrote.

Swan. You wrote?

Fel. To be sure I did. Ah—it was a sweet
letter! Artless, confiding, tender—just the
style!

Swan. [*angry*] My mother shall hear of it.

Fel. Ha, ha! We shall be married long before
the report reaches her.

Swan. Married!

Fel. Married. Oh, I have planned it well, trust me. You had better come quietly, and leave your airs. I have had enough of airs this long while.

Re-enter FUSTIAN.

Swan. Here is Fustian, at least he knows me. Oh Fustian, Fustian, who am I?

Fel. [*sharply*] Who am I?

Fust. [*staring from one to the other*] Oh, my head—my head!

Fel. Which is the Princess of us two—hey?

Fust. The Princess?

Fel. Make your bow at once to the Princess!

[*Stamps.*

[*FUSTIAN bows awkwardly to her.*

Fel. Aha! And take care you bow and be humble in my presence, I'll have no friendship and nonsense. Now come, and bring that girl along.

[*Exit FELINA.*

Swan. Fustian! Do you not know me? Do clothes make such a difference?

Fust. I be dull. [*Stands shaking head: SWAN-HILD turns away with a sigh.*] The Princess—the swan's voice—oh, my poor head! Falada, Falada, help me! [*A soft strain heard.*] Hush!

Song, FALADA [FUSTIAN].

Air—"Scots, wha hae."

Ye that know a swan so white
Can a crow deceive you quite?
Though in feathers gaily dight,
Queen she cannot be.

Trust ye truth and gentleness,
Sweet of voice though poor of dress,
There will be the true Princess,
There's the Queen for me!

By the tongue that loves to scold,
By the pert that apes the bold,
By the dross that would be gold,
Queen she cannot be.

Turn ye rather where you find
Eyes that bless and manners kind,
There's the ruler to my mind,
There's the Queen for me!

[*At the end SWANHILD turns up C.
with her hand out.*

Swan. Fustian!

Fust. [*running up to her*] Falada knows her!
Falada he's bright, but I be so dull. Princess!
[*He falls on his knees and kisses her
hand as the curtain falls.*

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE III.—*The Court of EUGENE and AQUILA.*

AQUILA *discovered standing knitting and looking
out of window R. EUGENE L., with his feet up
reading.*

Aqu. My son, I see that herdboy Curdkin is
chasing the geese down there in the meadow.
How dare he chase our Royal geese! If I see
him do it again I shall dismiss him in person—
in *person*. Eugene, do you hear? Cease the
rapt study of that portrait and attend to me
when I speak.

Eug. [*rousing*] Madam, your pardon. 'Tis
a book I study, not a picture.

Aqu. Then it ought to be a picture. Is it not the day you are to meet your bride?

Eug. [*depressed*] I believe so.

Aqu. [*sitting*] I suppose you will say next you prefer a book to a bride.

Eug. No, madam, I will not say it.

Aqu. I thought you were so eager to see your cousin Swanhild again.

Eug. So I was. [*Sighs.*] But the feeling has gone off.

Aqu. Your feelings always do. That is the worst of you poets. They make up a dummy figure out of dreamstuff, and beside that figure actual maidens fade.

Eug. Yes. I suppose all girls are silly.

[*He unfolds the letter.*]

Aqu. Houghty-toighty, nothing of the sort! I was a most sensible girl. Do you hear, Eugene?

Eug. [*starts*] Yes, madam.

Aqu. What paper is that?

Eug. The letter she sent.

[*Hands it to AQUILA, who reads it.*]

Aqu. Hum—— Of course she has been abominably educated. Flurribel never could choose a governess. I remember that Miss Robinson——

Eug. [*hastily*] And this is her portrait.

[*Hands FELINA'S portrait.*]

Aqu. That? That my sister's child? Never! What a doll!

Eug. When I think of little Swanhild, with her flying hair, and of how she used to beat me at marbles—what am I saying, I mean, of how I used to beat her [*sighs prodigiously*]. But there you are. 'Tis the hairdressers do it. I always say so.

Aqu. Rubbish. But 'tis certainly strange. Von Utter thought her so charming. In fact, I think he is in love with her himself.

Eug. I know he is.

Aqu. But then, of course, he is so short-sighted. He never knows one girl from another.

Eug. And he's in love with most of them.

Aqu. It may account for his misleading description.

Eug. No, madam—hairdressers. Do a girl's hair, and you never know her again. Blame the barbers alone. Why, look at Von Utter himself and what they have made of him. You'd never say he was anything but a fool, to look at him. Yet——

VORHERR VON UTTER *enters behind him.*

Aqu. Hush, Eugene. He approaches.

[Formal greetings to contrast with Scene I.]

Well, Vorherr, have you conveyed your charge?

Utter. Your Majesties, Princess Swanhild is this moment alighting from her horse.

Eug. *[interested]* What's she like, old boy? *[Aquila frowns.]* I mean—I trust the Princess is not exhausted with her—transit. *[UTTER may supply this word.]*

Utter *[troubled]*. Well, sire, her manner, at times, suggested fatigue. *[Aside]* At least I hope so.

Eug. *[interested]* Temper?

Aqu. *[hastily]* Poor child, travelling is so tiresome. Eugene, go to meet her and bring her in. 'Twould be a becoming attention.

[EUGENE looks at portrait, puffs up a sigh, and exit.]

Aqu. [*sitting up*] Now, Vorherr, I want to know a thing or two.

Utter [*nervous*]. Your M—Majesty has but to ask.

Aqu. Your perfect Princess, it seems, does not grow on acquaintance.

Utter. Far from growing, madam, she is smaller than I expected.

Aqu. Height has nothing to do with it. I mean manners.

Utter. Madam, if I understand aright, the Princess Swanhild had several contretemps en voyage.

Aqu. Eh? Talk English.

Utter. To begin with, her suite was set upon by robbers, and deserted her to a man.

Aqu. Dear me!

Utter. She informed me she was betrayed into their hands by a wandering mountebank and his daughter—a pretty girl——

Aqu. Keep to the point.

Utter. Whom she had hired to show her the way.

Aqu. Hum. Have you secured this miscreant who betrayed her Highness?

Utter. Madam, we have. Yet he seems to me more silly than mischievous. But the Princess says his silliness is assumed to cloak his dark intentions.

Uqu. And the girl?

Utter. She seemed honest and dull. The Princess thinks your Majesty might find a menial office for her in the Palace; scullion or something dirty, she suggests.

Aqu. [*looking out*] We need a gooseherd for the Royal geese. That boy Curdkin is not worth his wages.

Utter. Curdkin, say you? An insolent little ruffian, your Majesty. He bade me keep my hair on recently, as I walked in the goose meadow by the river. I feel sure it would be well to supplant him.

Aqu. With a pretty girl—eh, Vorherr? Well, we will see about it. Now say, did the Princess question you about the Prince?

Utter. Her questions, madam, rained upon me. She scarce gave me time to select my words in answer.

Aqu. How good for you. What did she want to know?

Utter. A-hem—— The exact income derived from seven kingdoms. Her Highness seems to have a head for business.

Aqu. Ah. Nothing about the Prince—er—personally?

Utter. A-hem—— She asked if he liked bright society—and if he had a good memory.

Aqu. Ah. Rather singular. What did you say? That he always liked the dullest people, and always remembered the most awkward things?

Utter. Madam, I said he was a poet. I did what I could for him. [*AQUILA laughs.*] These young girls, you know—eh, eh?

[*Waves his hands smiling.*]

Aqu. You know, Vorherr: not I. [*A cheer without.*] Ha, she approaches.

*AQUILA rises. More cheering: then enter
EUGENE escorting FELINA.*

Eug. Madam, our fair cousin Swanhild.

Aqu. [*gracious*] Soon, I trust, to be my fair daughter.

[*Holds out hand.*]

Fel. [*elaborately*] My second mother!

[*Embraces AQUILA, who draws back surprised.*]

Aqu. I hope, my dear, that your—your first mother is well?

Fel. Mother is so-so, thank you. [*Aside*] "My dear" from a Queen!

Aqu. I hope you are glad to be here.

Fel. Enraptured! Oh, this dear old palace, how well I recollect it. I have been trying to recall my last visit here to Eugene—when we played games and all that—but he is so poetical that he has forgotten all about it.

Eug. Not quite all.

Fel. [*brightly*] Now don't pretend to remember if you don't! I hate pretending. [*To AQUILA*] Don't you?

Aqu. [*emphatically*] I never tolerate it.
[*FELINA draws back.*]

Fel. [*aside, to EUGENE, who is looking out of the window*] Dear Aunt has aged indeed. I'd hardly know her again.

Eug. I beg your pardon.

Fel. There, you were day-dreaming. But never mind. I adore poetry, too. You shall read me some. I love about the birds and the bounding lambs and all that.

Eug. [*looking out*] Do you like geese?

Fel. What? O no, horrid things.

Eug. We have some capital geese. Mother, Curdkin is chasing the geese again. You had better find a new gooseherd.

Aqu. I thought——

Fel. [*interrupting*] Gooseherd, dearest Aunt? I've the very thing for you. There's a coarse girl I fetched along to show me the way.

She's good for nothing better than herding geese.

Aqu. The question is, is she good *enough* to herd *my* geese. However, I will see her. Where is she?

Utter. She waits without, madam, in the court.

Aqu. I leave you then, my son.

[EUGENE kisses her hand. She *curtseys freezingly* to FELINA whose back is turned, and exit with UTTER.

Fel. Phew—I'm glad she's gone. Now we shall get on better.

Eug. Won't you sit down? [*Aside*] What shall I say to her?

Fel. [*aside*] I ought to be poetical, I suppose. [*She sits, and gives a long sigh.*] Memories are sweet, ain't they? Dear old days beyond recall.

Eug. Quite beyond recall. [*Suddenly turns*] Excuse me, do you play marbles?

Fel. Marbles? Vulgar game—I should think not.

Eug. I thought not, I thought not. [*Aside*] The hairdressers have done for that!

Fel. [*aside*] Marbles? I believe he's mad. I don't half like being alone with him. [*Aloud*] It must be lovely having seven kingdoms all of your own.

Eug. What I'm bothered about is the eighth kingdom—the one I have never conquered.

Fel. Indeed? Oh, but you must get it. Eight is better than seven any day. [*Aside*] I wonder if he is talking poetry or fact. [*Aloud*] Who does the eighth kingdom belong to?

Eug. Myself. But I have never conquered it. Listen! [*Music is heard.*]

Fel. [*loud*] Now what I think——

Eug. Be quiet.

Fel. Well, I never!

FALADA'S voice behind curtain sings.

Air—"The harp that once."

The heart that once true love enthrals

No king can call his own,

Though lord of all his castle halls

He's captive on his throne.

Should duty point to other ways,

His rebel heart will beat

When thrills a voice from former days,

And call him to her feet.

[*FELINA springs up in a fury.*]

Fel. It's that mad mountebank and his nasty horse! Catch him, hold him, bind him fast. He is behind that curtain. [*To EUGENE, who is sitting rapt*] Do you hear? He is my enemy and I hate him.

Eug. I beg your pardon. He is my enemy, too. I was thinking so.

[*He rises, goes to curtain, and drags out FUSTIAN clasping FALADA.*]

Fel. You reptile!

Fust. Mercy, mercy, Princess! It wasn't me—I be too dull. It was Falada did it. Falada would sing.

Fel. Never mind which it was. I'll have you both hung.

Eug. My dear Swanhild——

Fel. Stop prating, and do what I ask.

[*Suddenly changing manner.*] My first request, dear Prince! [*She falls on his neck.*]

Eug. All right, all right. [*Calls.*] Within there! Von Utter!

Enter VORHERR VON UTTER.

Utter. My lord? [*EUGENE waves him to FELINA.*] Madam?

Fel. Take that old man out, and hang him.

Utter. Yes, madam.

[*Prepares to march out FUSTIAN who drops FALADA.*]

Fel. [*aside*] Ha, ha! This feels something like being a Queen.

Eug. One moment, Vorherr.

Utter. Sire?

Eug. [*picks up FALADA*] Take this wooden horse out, and hang *him*. The Princess is too merciful.

Utter. Yes, sire. [*He takes FALADA delicately.*] Any further commands, Highnesses?

Eug. Not at present, thank you.

Fel. Stop! [*As UTTER retires, she rushes after him, seizes FALADA, breaks his head off, and throws the bits on the floor.*] There! You're laughing at me, and I hate you. But we'll see who laughs last.

[*She ramps out, and leaves EUGENE and UTTER staring at one another. Between them C. FUSTIAN falls on his knees by FALADA.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE IV.—*Just outside the city wall. A wooden screen-frame covered with ivy, R. A pair of wooden steps bowered in ivy, R.C. FALADA'S head hangs in this ivy. Behind it FUSTIAN must be concealed, with some means for mounting to the top of the steps. If he speaks through a paper tube emerging near the head, the effect will be hollow.*

VORHERR VON UTTER *enters, elegantly clad.*

Utter. I hope I have neglected none of her new Highness's orders for the ceremony to-day. She is so particular—so very particular—my head feels quite unstable on my shoulders when I converse with her. [*Produces memorandum and reads.*] “Beer in city fountain, cheap quality.”—Yes. “No rice in church.”—Yes. “Speeches short.”—Alas, and my superior oration at the breakfast was to take an hour at least. What is this? “Hang mountebank!”—Ah, well, he is as good as hanged, poor fellow. I met the rabble yesterday escorting him to his cell. [*Stows away book.*] Well, well. Now for a quiet stroll to fit me for my arduous duties as Eugene's best man. This verdant meadow beneath the city wall is pleasant, and who knows but I may have a glimpse of the new Goosegirl at her duties. Sweet creature, she is indeed an improvement on that ugly little Curdkin. Indeed, as I observed to her Majesty, she seems too good for a gooseherd——

Fal. Alas, alas!

Utter [*starting*]. Eh? Who spoke? [*Peers about.*] Ha, what have we here? [*Approaches head, fumbling with eyeglass.*] Dear me, most singular.

Curd. [*heard without*]. Here, hi! You let that alone. That's mine, none o' yourn.

Utter. Why, that disgusting boy is still there.
[*CURDKIN enters.*] Rascal, how came you by this bauble?

Curd. No business o' yourn.

[*Chuckles suddenly.*]

Utter. What amuses you, you young ruffian?

Curd. When they tied 'is 'ands, and 'e 'ad to let it drop, 'ow 'e cried. Begged for it, 'e did, the tears a-runnin' down. 'Ow we larfed!

Utter. Ha! That wretched mountebank, I suppose.

Curd. His 'ands were tied, so 'e couldn't do nothing; so we pelted 'im all the way to prison. My stone it 'it 'im on the nose. Ho, ho, so it did.

Utter. And who put the—object up here?

Curd. [*jerking thumb L.*] She did—thinkin' the window of 'is cell might be in the wall 'ere, and 'e might see it.

Utter. She? What, the Goosegirl?

Curd. [*scowling*] The Girl. Geese are mine, none o' hern.

Utter. Boy, her Majesty dismissed you in person. I entered her myself in the books as the official Goosegirl.

Curd. Ho, ho! If they knowed what I knowed, she'd not be Goosegirl long.

Utter. Hey! What's that?

Curd. [*darkly*] There's summat wrong with her.

Utter. What do you mean?

Curd. Talkin' to that there wooden 'orse, an' singin'. I tell yer, I don't like it.

Utter. Eh?

Curd. Combin' 'er 'air an' all of an evenin'. If you'd seen the way she goes on.

Utter. My good boy, I wish I had. I always longed to have a peep at the hair under that unbecoming cap. Boy, tell me, is she beautiful?

Curd. Yah, you an' your beauty. She's *queer*, that's what she is. Next time I catch 'er at it, I'll pull some of 'er 'air out and see what it's made of. Real 'air don't shine like that.

Utter [*looking off L.*]. Surely I see her approaching. [*Simpers and bows off.*] Charming creature, ha! Go away now, little boy, for I must speak with her. Do you hear?

Curd. Go away yoursel.

Utter [*bowing*]. Madam—Ah, methinks she sees me.

Curd. Clear out, or I set the geese at yer, They knows me. [*Whistles.*]

Geese [*without*]. Wark, wark, wark.

Curd. 'Ear that? They're a-comin'!

Geese. Wark, wark. Hiss-s-s!

Utter [*feeling for his sword*]. You need not think Von Utter is alarmed—ahem!—by birds. But I will not waste time by talking to you, Curdkin. I will continue my walk, and keep an eye [*eyeglass*]—a bright eye—on you both
[*Exit with dignity R.*]

SWANHILD enters *L.*, while CURDKIN retires to crouch
R. by the wall and spy her.

Swan. Oh, I am hungry, and tired, and alone. I am afraid of these great, noisy geese and of the rough boy who drives them. Oh Fustian, old friend, where are you? Are you dead indeed?

Fal. Alas!

Swan. [to FALADA] Falada, Falada, there thou art hanging.

Fal.

Bride, bride, there thou art ganging.

Alas, alas, if thy mother knew it,

Sadly, sadly her heart would rue it.

Swan. Oh, mother!

[*She weeps under wall R.C.*

VORHERR *re-enters cautiously.*

Curd. Now then! What do you make of that.

Utter. Singular indeed! What a voice she has, what a manner. Curdkin, you did well to warn me. All is not right here. I will fetch the Prince immediately. [*Exit R.*

Curd. [*swaggering up to SWANHILD*] Now then, get out o' that, do you hear?

Swan. [*lifting head*] Ah, Curdkin, is it you?

Curd. That's my horse, none o' yourn.

Swan. Curdkin, will you sell the horse to me?

Curd. No, I won't. Get up; that's my dinner you're settin' on.

Swan. Ah. [*She discovers and hands him his wallet. He squats C. and begins to eat with his back to her. He tosses a piece of bread off L.*]

Catch it, good gander. My, how he gobbles.

Geese. Wark, wark, wark.

Swan. If you don't want all your bread, Curdkin, will you give me a little piece?

Curd. No I won't.

[*Throws away another bit.*

Geese. Wark, wark.

Swan. [*rising*] I think the geese will be kinder than you. I will go back to them.

Curd. Ay, go and say "bo" to 'em, do. I'd

like to see big gander Peter with your ankle in his beak. My, how you'd run! [*Exit SWANHILD.*] She's gone. Never thought she'd have the pluck. Here, hi! You stop. Them be my geese, none o' yourn.

[*He picks up a stone, flings it after her, and then runs out.*]

Enter EUGENE and UTTER R.

Eug. My dear Von Utter, is it really worth coming so far? Princess Swanhild was—er—considerably annoyed at my leaving her. And really—a goosegirl!—however pretty—

Utter. Trust me, sire. The matter wants looking into.

Eug. Ah—I thought the matter merely wanted looking at.

Utter. This is something exceptional.

Eug. My dear Vorherr, it always is! Surely we should know by now that all your geese are swans.

Utter. Sire, your own eyes shall be the judge. Linger here aside with me for but a few moments. I need not detain you long from—ha—more charming company.

Eug. Don't mention it.

[*They hide behind ivy screen R.*]

Re-enter SWANHILD L. wiping her face.

Swan. He has spattered me with mud. It is hard. He will not let me mind the geese, yet he will not mind them himself. If he would leave me solitary a moment, at least, I could comb out my hair. I feel so draggled and unkempt when all the city is in holiday attire.

[*She puts her hands up to her cap, and a lock falls.*]

Curd. [*re-entering*] Would yer? None o' that. If you go a-lettin' of that 'air down, I'll pull it.

[*He begins to play marbles C.*

Swan. Are those marbles you have there, Curdkin? I love marbles. I used to play with—with somebody at marbles once. Will you let me play with you?

Curd. No, I won't.

Swan. Well, would you mind playing farther down the meadow where the geese are.

Curd. Yes, I would. Move on yersel'.

[*Makes a face at her.*

Swan. [*going up to head*] Oh, Falada, dear Falada, help me. Cannot we get rid of him? Sing to me, Falada.

Duet, FALADA and SWANHILD.

Air—"Oft in the Stilly Night."

Blow, little breeze at play,
Blow Curdkin's hat away.
Follow he must and will,
O'er dale and over hill,
Let him nor stop nor stay
Till I have }
She has } done a-combing.

[*SWANHILD lets down her hair.*

*CURDKIN tries to pull it, but
clutches at his hat. CURDKIN
says, "Drat the wind!"*

FALADA alone.

Your legs will ache,
No breath you'll take,
But far you'll go a-roaming,

Through all the world,
Till locks are curled,
And she has done a-combing.

Together.

Blow, little breeze at play, etc.

Curd. Drat the wind! There goes my hat.

[Hat flies off R. Exit C. after it running. SWANHILD combs her hair on the right side, so that UTTER and EUGENE re-enter unperceived.]

Eug. What is this? Vorherr, whom have you brought me to see?

Utter. The Prince seems struck all of a heap. Sire, what is it?

Eug. Von Utter, your goose is a swan indeed. 'Tis she!

Utter. She, my lord? Who?

Eug. My swan—my little cousin. Ah, what treachery is here?

[He lays his hand on his sword. SWANHILD turns and sees him.]

Swan. The Prince! And my hair all down! Oh, mercy!

[She hides her head in the ivy. Wedding march heard.]

Utter. My lord, the Princess approaches.

Eug. I know no Princess.

Utter. My lord, my lord! Your nuptial morning!

Eug. Ha! *[He swings round]* Well, let her come.

[UTTER goes to escort FELINA, who enters L. tripping daintily over the mud. AQUILA follows.]

Fel. Dearest Prince, what a place to walk. Ah, the dirt!

Eug. I stepped down, madam, to look at the—geese.

Fel. Poetry again! But I quite see the idea. Minding lambs, or geese, or anything in a sweet green field must be delightful. [*Clasping hands.*] I always longed to be a little shepherdess!

Eug. Or a goosegirl?

Fel. A goosegirl! Charming!

Eug. Princess, I can refuse you nothing on our bridal morn. You shall!

Fel. Dear Prince! You mean I shall have a shepherdess costume.

Eug. No. I mean you shall be a goosegirl and herd my mother's geese.

Fel. What? Ah, tis a joke. Ha, ha—so witty! Then who is to be your Queen, dear Prince.

Eug. This! [*He holds out his hand to SWANHILD, who comes forward C.*

Fel. [*furious*] What? That slut? You're mad!

Eug. Mother, look at her. Is she not your sister's child? [*All stare at SWANHILD.*

Aqu. Good gracious me, of course she is. I always knew that vulgar girl could not be Flurribel's daughter. Come and kiss me, child, at once, and tell me how it all happened.

[*SWANHILD goes to her L.*

Eug. [*sternly*] And as for that woman, that impostor, take those clothes off her, give her the roughest you can find, and send her to work in the fields.

Fel. [*screaming*] Oh, not that cap! Not that horrid cap! [*UTTER gives her crown to*

EUGENE, and her robe to AQUILA, and crams the cap on to her head.] Princess,—Swanhild, save me!

[*She falls on her knees L. SWANHILD, on whom AQUILA has placed the royal robe, makes a movement towards EUGENE, and kneels.*

Swan. Eugene, forgive Felina.

Eug. [*placing the crown on her head*] Do you command it, Swanhild, as our Queen?

Swan. No, Eugene. I ask it as your cousin.

Eug. Ah, then it must be done.

[*He waves to UTTER who frees FELINA.*

Swan. [*rising*] Now, if only Fustian were here, how happy I should be.

Eug. Vorherr, go and set that poor fellow at liberty.

Utter. That, sire, is easily done.

[*UTTER climbs steps and opens window R.C. FUSTIAN looks out over the screen.*

Fust. Hullo! Here I be, Princess and Swan. [*He stares at SWANHILD and FELINA.*] Lord save us now, they're mixed again! Which is tother now? Oh, my poor head!

Swan. Fustian dear, ask Falada. [*Points to head.*] Falada knows everything, doesn't he? So Falada shall end the play.

[*FUSTIAN rushes on FALADA, climbs steps and sits clasping him to sing. A chime of bells is heard while EUGENE and SWANHILD, UTTER and FELINA, prepare to dance.*

*Gavotte for Four. Song with chorus in duct.
See Hadow's School Songs.*

Air—"Felton's Gavotte" (or "Farewell, Manchester").

Ring, bells, ring a peal
For our marriage tide.
Ring the joy we feel
In our Gooseherd Bride.
Ere we close our story,
Ring down joy and glory
On the Goosegirl, who is Queen and Bride.

Ring, bells, ring again
For our marriage tide;
Make the moral plain,
Ring a knell to Pride.
Pride must have its tumble,
Fortune crown the humble,
Like the Goosegirl, who is Queen and Bride.

So, kind friends, good-night,
While the bells ring on,
May your hopes be bright,
Every Goose a Swan.
And at close of story,
May you rise to glory,
Like the Goosegirl, who is Queen and Bride.

[*Tableau—Curtain.*]

BOOTS AND THE NORTH
WIND.

[FROM THE NORSE TALES.]

NOTE.

The only difficulty of this play is the magic tablecloth. It is suggested that the "dinners" should be made of brightly painted cardboard, attached to the cloth, and lying flat in the folds of it until (like a card theatre) they are stood upright with a wave of the operator's hand. The "sausages" will thus serve for two scenes.

SONGS USED (ALL ENGLISH).

"MY LODGING IS ON THE COLD GROUND."

"BLOW AWAY THE MORNING DEW."

"NOW, OH NOW, I NEEDS MUST PART."

"THE LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER."

"THE NORTH COUNTRY LASS."

"ONCE I LOVED A MAIDEN FAIR."

"TRELAWNY."

"BEGONE, DULL CARE."

"THE LEATHER BOTTLE."

THE SCENES.

- I. BOOTS' MOTHER'S COTTAGE.
- II. THE "ANCHOR" INN.
- III. SAME AS I.
- IV. A DESOLATE PLAIN OF ICE AND SNOW.
- V. SAME AS II.

CHARACTERS.

BOOTS.

HIS MOTHER.

THE NORTH WIND.

LANDLORD }
LANDLADY } *of the "Anchor."*

PROPERTIES.

A TABLECLOTH.

A CAT (*velvet suggested*).

A STICK.

BOOTS AND THE NORTH WIND.

SCENE I.—*Boots' Mother's Cottage.*

BOOTS' MOTHER *discovered spinning and singing.*

Air—"My Lodging is on the Cold Ground."

Mother.

A widow I live with my son here alone,
As handsome a lad as you'll find ;
But this cottage is all we can reckon our own,
With a small kitchen-garden behind.

We've a hog and a sow,

Six hens and a cow

And a greedy but sociable cat,

So we're fairly well-off, and I think you'll allow,
That our living is not very fat.

Now winter comes round and the hurricanes
blow

So I sit by the fire and spin,

And Boots has just gone to the cellar below

For a handful of meal from the bin.

He's a good son to me,

As good as can be,

And I cannot complain about that ;

But when all's said and done with, I think you'll
agree,

That our living is not very fat.

Enter BOOTS.

Boots. Oh, mother!

Mother. Well, Boots, have you got the meal from the bin?

Boots. Oh, mother!

Mother. Well, out with it, boy! Was there ever such a lad?

Boots. Oh, mother, I went down to the bin, and I opened it, and looked in, and oh, mother, there was only one handful left, just enough for our supper to-night.

Mother. Well, we have a bit of money in the old stocking, Boots, and to-morrow you shall go to the Mill and buy some more. We'll have our supper to-night.

Boots. Oh, mother, no, we shan't!

Mother. What do you mean? No supper?

Boots. No supper to-night, mother. As I was coming back across the garden, the North Wind blew, and blew, and blew; and although I shut my hands as tight as wax, the North Wind blew all the meal away! Not a grain left!—I licked my fingers, but there was not even a taste.

Song, BOOTS.

Air—"Blow away the Morning Dew."

Boots.

I took a double handful
And held it very tight,
But the North Wind blew, and away it flew,
And so no supper to-night!

Chorus (in which MOTHER joins).

And sing, blow away the evening meal,
The meal, oh the meal!
Sing, blow away the evening meal,
How rude of him to steal!

Boots.

So we and the bin are empty,
And empty we must stay;
We can't refill, for at the Mill,
It's Early Closing Day!
So sing, blow away the evening meal,
The meal, oh the meal!
Sing, blow away the evening meal,
How hung-e-ry we feel!

Mother. Well, it can't be helped. Here's a sup of milk I put aside for the cat, and you shall have it.

Boots. Oh, mother, isn't that rather cruel for Pussy?

Mother. Never mind him, dear; he had a mouse last week. Come, drink it up.

Boots [after drinking]. Aha! Mother, my supper has made a new man of me.

Mother. Bless us, what next?

Boots. And it has put a thought into my head, mother.

Mother. I always said milk was wonderful stuff. It used to make your poor father think, too; every Sunday after dinner he would sit down in that old arm-chair, and think, and think, and think—with his eyes shut.

Boots. The thought that the milk has put into my head is this, mother. The North Wind has robbed us of our meal. I will go

to the North Wind, and ask him to give it back!

Mother. My brave boy! But how will you find the way?

Boots. Why, I'll set my face to the North Wind, and follow my nose till I get there. I'll start to-night!

Mother. No, dear, wait till to-morrow; your flannel shirt won't be properly aired till then. See it hangs before the fire now.

Boots. Very well then, mother, I'll start at sunrise to-morrow morning, and then, hey! for the North!

Mother. I don't like to think of you all among the icebergs and the Polar bears and the Eskimos, but I suppose it is all we can do. Bless you, my boy, and listen to my advice.

Song, BOOTS' MOTHER.

Air—"Now, oh now, I needs must part."

Hero of the Arctic Seas,
 Doomed to travel o'er the ice,
 Pay attention, if you please.
 While I give you good advice.
 Change your boots on rainy days,
 Keep your mind from thoughts of sin,
 Guard your tongue in all it says,
 Wear thick flannel next your skin.

If you're wheezy in the chest,
 After tramping through the snows,
 When at night you seek your rest,
 Put some tallow on your nose.

{ Drink hot sal-volatile,
 And however bad you are,
 { On the morrow you will be
 Free from bronchial catarrh!

or

{ Don't forget the Sunlight Soap
 And perhaps a Beecham's Pill;
 { Thus defended, Boots, I hope,
 You need never catch a chill.

[*Scene closes.*]

SCENE II.—*The "Anchor" Inn.*

LANDLORD and LANDLADY *discovered after supper.*
 LANDLADY *is ironing, LANDLORD smoking by the*
fire. He sings.

Song, LANDLORD.

Air—"The Lincolnshire Poacher."

L'lord.

When I was but a youngster I used to plough
 all day,
 And then go out a-courtin' to pass the time
 away.
 But now I'm old and sober, and have all I
 desire,
 Oh, 'tis my delight of a winter's night to
 sit beside the fire.
 And now I've turned innkeeper, and married
 a wife,
 And both are quite contented and lead a
 merry life;

We takes in hungry travellers, and puts 'em up, and then,

Oh, the following day they has to pay—and we takes 'em in again!

L'lord. Well, well, to be sure! 'tis a hearty voice I has, and me fifty-seven year come Michaelmas! 'Twas my singing as first made ye love me, eh, wife?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. A hearty voice? Do ye remember the night I sang to ye first?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. And the ass that answered to my voice, beyond in the fower-acre meadow?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. Well, well, they *was* times, to be sure! Thirty years ago? I ha' made a power o' money since then.

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. And there's more to make, more to make. Ah, 'tis a fine trade, keepin' an inn.

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. But there be but few travellers this time o' the year.

L'lady. Nay, John.

L'lord. So them as *does* come, must pay more. Ho, ho, ho! 'tis a grand trade, keepin' an inn!

L'lady. Aye, John.

[*Knock at the door heard.*

L'lord. Save us! and who may that be? The door, wife!

LANDLADY *opens the door.* Enter BOOTS.

Boots. Good even to you, dame. Can I have a night's lodging?

L'lord. Ye can, and welcome, master. We have a room to spare, eh, wife?

L'lady. Aye, John.

Boots. I thank you.

L'lord. And I thinks you'll be wanting a bit o' supper, master?

Boots. I am hungry, but I won't trouble *you*. I have all I want in my pocket.

[Takes out tablecloth, and spreads it on the table.]

L'lord, Well, I sees the cloth, but where's the vittles?

Boots. I haven't quite decided what I want yet.

L'lord. Be ye crazy, young master?

Boots [*laughing*]. No, gaffer. You must know this is a magic tablecloth, which was given me by the North Wind, in return for some meal of ours which he blew out of my hand. I have just been to pay him a visit, and I am now going home to my mother. I have only to spread this tablecloth, and wish for anything I like to eat, and it appears at once.

L'lord. Well, to be sure! Did ye ever hear the like in your born days, wife?

L'lady. Nay, John.

Boots. Look now! I want a rabbit pie and brown potatoes and pickled walnuts and a roly-poly pudding and some apples and a bottle of fizzy lemonade!

[The table is seen to be covered with the above.]

L'lord. 'Tis wunnerful! Well, to be sure! Who'd a' thought it? But seein's believin', eh, wife?

L'lady. Aye, John.

Boots [*eating*]. It will be very useful to my mother and me. Wasn't it kind of the North Wind?

L'lord. Come to think of it, 'twas the North Wind as blew down our old ellum-tree, eh, wife?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. Then I'll be off to him myself some day, and see what he'll give me.

Boots. Well, I've made a good supper. You can take the rest, dame, but I'll take the cloth. Heigh-ho! [*He yawns.*] Will you show me my room, landlord?

L'lord. With all the pleasure in life, master. Take the gentleman up to the best room, wife.

L'lady. Aye, John. [*Exit with BOOTS.*]

L'lord. [*after a pause*] 'Tis a wunnerful thing, that tablecloth: [*pause*] an' a useful thing: [*pause*] I covets that table-cloth: [*pause*] an' I'll have it! [*Re-enter LANDLADY.*] Young Master safe a-bed, wife?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. Hark ye, then. Find a tablecloth the very picture of his'n, and take his'n, and leave our'n in the place of his'n, while he be sleepin'.

L'lady. Nay, John.

L'lord. What? Be ye afraid?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. Then I'll even do it myself. An' I wunnot kiss ye good-night. So there!

[*LANDLADY goes to drawer, and brings LANDLORD a tablecloth. Exit LANDLORD with cloth.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE III.—*Boots' Mother's Cottage.*

Song, BOOTS' MOTHER.

Tune—"The North Country Lass."

I.

Oh, Pussy and me, we're as sad as can be,
We are weary of waiting for Boots to come
back.

It is clear he is lost in the floes and the frost,
And the little white snowflakes have covered
his track.

Chorus with Cat.

Oh, miaow, and miaow, and miaow, and miaow,
We'd fain go to find him but *don't know how!*

2.

Oh, the hearth it is cold, and the furniture sold,
And the larder is empty as empty can be,
There is nought in the house but a single dead
mouse— *[Show mouse.*
Which is nice for poor Pussy, but no good to
me!

Chorus.

Oh, miaow, etc.

To keep us from starving we *don't know how.*

Mother. Well, Pussy, here's another day
nearly gone, and where's your Master? It's
time he should be home again. I hope the
North Wind will be kind, and give him some-
thing in return for our lost meal. What do
you say? Oh, you hear him coming, do you?
You wonderful Pussy! *[Enter BOOTS.]* My
dear boy!

Boots. Mother ! [*Embrace.*]

Mother. Well, how did you get on ?

Boots. Oh, splendidly, mother ! The North Wind was quite nice about it, but said that the meal he blew away had now taken root, and was beginning to sprout, so it wouldn't be much use to us. So he gave me this.

[*Pulls out cloth.*]

Mother. A tablecloth !

Boots. Yes, but a magic one, mother.

Mother. Magic ? (*To cat*) I've heard of a marked tablecloth, Pussy, and an *unmarked* tablecloth, but magic—well, well !

Boots. Whenever we want a meal, we need only spread the cloth, and call for whatever we like, and it appears.

Mother. Well, I'm blessed ! [*To cat*] Pussy, your young master is playing off a little joke on us, eh ? Ah, his poor father always loved a joke, and I soon learnt never to believe a word he said.

Boots. Come, let's have supper, mother. [*They spread cloth.*] What would you like ?

Mother. Well, I'm sure I don't know. Can it provide *anything* ? Even *sausages* ?

Boots. Oh yes, sausages. How would you like them, boiled, or roast, or baked, or fried, or grilled, or filleted ? With potatoes, or without ?

Mother. Let's have them fried, with potatoes.

Boots. Very well then, mother. Now watch ! We want fried sausages with potatoes, for two, hot, at once ! [*Pause.*] We want fried sausages with potatoes, hot ! [*Pause.*]

Mother. Ahem ! What's wrong ?

Boots. I don't know, mother. It was all

right at the inn where I stayed last night. But it doesn't work now. Ah, I believe that landlord must have stolen it! But I'll be even with him!

Mother. Yes, Boots, it would be odd if you can't be even with him.

Boots. I'll have my revenge on that landlord; I don't quite know how, mother; but I'll go again to the North Wind to-morrow; and tell him all about it. He is a kind old gentleman.

Duet, BOOTS and MOTHER.

Air—"Once I loved a maiden fair"

Boots.

Once I knew a worthy host
But he did deceive me;
Of the thing I valued most
Went and did bereave me.
Tablecloth, heaps for both;
Ah, my loss does grieve me.

Mother [*speaking to audience, finishing in a chant*]. There's more than a chance he
Is drawing on his fancy.

Boots [*smiting hands*].
There, she don't believe me!

Boots.

Once I had a magic meal,
Sausages and trifle,
Wine with an expensive seal,
For to make me joyful,
Onion-steak, Topsy-cake!
Ah, my loss does grieve me.

Mother [as before].

Between ourselves, I can't help doubting
The whole story of his outing.

Boots [as before].

There, she don't believe me !

Boots [following his mother excitedly, she soothing him].

Once I went to Farthest North !

Mother. There's a point I'll credit.

Boots. There I got a tablecloth !

Mother. Ay, since you have said it.

Boots [shouting]. Now, its GONE !

Mother. Yes, my son,

Gently, do not deave me.

In any case you had no excuse

For behaving like a goose.

Boots [as before].

There, she don't believe me !

[*He kicks the cat across the stage.*]

Mother. Seeing's believing, you know. Poor pussy !

Boots. Well, if you'll believe what you see,
I will see that you believe ; and now I believe
I'll be-leaving. [*He rushes out.*]

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE IV.—*A desolate plain—ice and snow.*

[NOTE.—*The wind throughout this scene can be supplied by somebody behind the scenes dexterously using a large palm-leaf fan.*]

Enter BOOTS.

Boots. I must be nearly there now. [*Wind whistles.*] Hark ! [*Wind again : he staggers and his cap flies off.*] Oh Mr North Wind, don't !

[*He tries to pick up his cap.*] The worst of it is, the nearer you get to the wind itself the harder it is to stand up. There, what did I say?

[*A loud whistle. BOOTS is blown over. While he is on all fours, enter the NORTH WIND.*

N. Wind. Ho, ho! Off your guard *that time*, youngster! Get up!

Boots. How can I, if you don't stop blowing?

N. Wind. Feel a draught, do you? Well, there you are. [*BOOTS regains his feet.*] Hullo, I seem to know you.

Boots. Yes. I'm Boots.

N. Wind. Boots, eh? Is that a common name?

Boots. Not very. Mother says it's in the family.

N. Wind. H'm. [*Looks at note-book.*] A Boots—with a mother—got a tablecloth from me not long since.

Boots. Yes, I did.

N. Wind. Then what do you mean by coming back? What do you mean by it? I'm getting angry. Whew! [*Wind. BOOTS staggers.*

Boots. I l—lost it.

N. Wind. Lost my gift? How?

Boots. I—I—I—I—

N. Wind. Answer, or I will freeze you into an iceberg as you stand!

[*A handful of snow flies across stage.*

Boots. O master, mercy! I—I showed it to an innkeeper, and he t—t—took it.

N. Wind. An innkeeper, and dishonest? Never!

Boots. He's been having all his meals off it for a month.

N. Wind. Then he certainly takes a licence with your property.

Boots. Landlords often take licences in my country.

N. Wind. Well, don't keep me waiting. Don't you see I am in a hurry, blow you!

Boots. I wish you wouldn't blow me, master. Then I could explain what I want.

N. Wind. What *do* you want?

Boots. Revenge!

N. Wind. Well, give me the man's name and address, and I will consider it.

[LANDLORD *is heard singing without.*

Boots. Why—[*looks off*].

N. Wind. What now?

Boots. If there isn't the very man himself; and singing, too, as if he had no crime on his conscience.

[NORTH WIND *signs to* BOOTS *to retire.*

Enter LANDLORD.

Song, LANDLORD.

Tune—"Trelawny."

Blow high, blow low, blow snow and storm,

Although my nose be blue,

A vigorous will will keep me warm

Whatever the wind may do.

I'll cross the icebergs, fight the wind,

I'll climb the Arctic Pole,

When John of the "Anchor's" made up his mind,

You'll find he'll get to his goal.

Oh, blow high, blow low, etc.

I've left my wife to keep the books,

She can't do the simplest sum

An' if any come by as she likes their looks
 They'll get her under their thumb,
 And all the neighbours was makin' a face
 And askin' me what's the use ;
 And a-callin' my errand a wild-goose-chase,
 But they'll find I'll catch my goose !
 Oh, blow high, blow low, etc.

N. Wind. It seems the knave is defying me.
 Whew ! *[He blows.*

L'lord. *[staggering]* Nay, you'll not blow me
 over in a hurry. It takes more'n you to over-
 turn twenty stone.

N. Wind. I will leave no stone unturned, sir,
 all the same. I have a will, too. I will show
 you who I am.

L'lord. Eh, a bully, are you ? Two can play
 at that, old ruby-nose. I be the Landlord of
 the Anchor, I be.

N. Wind. Ha, ha ; and I am the Landlord
 of the Arctic Seas.

L'lord. Eh, a proprietor, be you ?

N. Wind. Sole proprietor of leagues of ice
 and snow. Master of all I survey, for who will
 ever claim it of me ?

L'lord. They may try.

N. Wind. So they do, from time to time
 Ha, ha ! Look for their bones in the ice.

L'lord. Eh—ugh ! Not I. I've got my
 business, and mean to stick to that. I've a
 notion you're the man I want.

N. Wind. I am the North Wind. Whew !

L'lord. *[staggering backward]* That's all right.
 What I'd have you know is, you went and
 blowed over my ellum-tree come Christmas
 twelvemonth as was. And what's more,

'twould have torn down my new gate, if it hadn't just missed un. And what's more, 'twould have done for Brindle, our best cow, if Providence hadn't led her to stray into a neighbour's field. And what's more, I'll have compensation! And what do you say now.

N. Wind. Whew.

L'lord. That's no word between gentlemen. Come now, the tree be down.

N. Wind. Whew! Grow another.

L'lord. Pretty talk that: as if ellums grewed like cabbages. Give us summat solid.

N. Wind. I will. Here, landlord, take this elm-stick. Plant it where the elm-tree stood, and you shall see what you shall see.

L'lord. Aha! Now that's like talkin'. [*He examines stick all over.*] Seems common-like, eh? No trick anywhere.

N. Wind. Ha! ha! Be careful not to break it. Now off with you.

L'lord. Eh? Nice way of wishin' good-day between gentlemen!

N. Wind. Whew!

[*He blows him off the stage.*]

Re-enter BOOTS.

N. Wind. [*dancing*] Get along, too. I've had enough of you! I am excited. I am going to call out some little whirlwinds and dance round the Pole. Ha, ha. Whew!

Boots [*holding on his cap*]. But—please. Now he has both the stick and the cloth.

N. Wind. He has the stick but not its secret.

Boots. How can a stick have a secret.

N. Wind. Booby! The cloth does nothing till you order it. Well, the stick does nothing till you order it. Do you catch my meaning?

Boots. I begin to catch it. [*Brightens.*] So will *he* begin to catch it! Ho, ho!

N. Wind. You are not so thick as I thought. You have only to say to the elm-stick, "Lay on," and see what happens. Now, lie down.

Boots. W—what?

N. Wind. Lie down. Whew!

[*Wind rises to a shriek and he rushes out over BOOTS' prostrate body—which is blown aside.*]

Song, BOOTS.

Tune—"Begone, dull care."

Lay on, good stick!

Oh, shan't I be sorry for John.

Lay on, good stick!

The stick will begin to lay on.

It isn't Revenge that I'm seeking, oh no,
You do me great wrong if you think it is so.

I try—hard—to love my foe,—

[*Dancing*] But the stick will begin to lay on.

[*First four lines the same.*]

Revenge is most wrong, as my mother has taught,
To follow her lessons I always have sought;

I love—John—I know I ought,—

[*Dancing*] But the stick will begin to lay on.

Dances off.

[*Curtain.*]

SCENE V.—*The Inn.*

LANDLORD *discovered showing LANDLADY the stick.*

L'lord. Looks like any other stick, eh, wife?

L'lady. Aye, John.

L'lord. You'd never guess that had a whole green ellum-tree in its innards?

L'lady. Nay, John.

L'lord. You wait till us plants it. I be a-fearing though, growing so fast it may frighten the cows.

L'lady. Ay, John.

L'lord. What if their milk goes—pretty fix us should be in.

L'lady. Ay, John.

L'lord. I'd have the law on yon North Wind, if so. He wouldn't hear the last on it in a hurry: not if I be roused he wouldn't—nor you wouldn't either.

L'lady. [*soothing*] Nay, John—Ay, John—Nay, John, nay, nay, nay.

L'lord. [*soothed*] Goodwife, you as a gift of words. Well, there! [*He puts the stick in the far corner.*] Let's have supper.

L'lady. Ay, John.

[*The magic tablecloth is spread.*]

L'lord. My call, remember, wife. None of your busybody interference.

L'lady. [*small voice*] Nay, John.

L'lord. Women folk has no imagination. A good dinner needs imagination. [*Puffs and looks big.*] Beer and cheese! [*Dinner appears.*] Now put the cloth safe away again. [*Cloth is hidden in the clock-case.*] Now fall to, wife. Phoo, I've earned it. Dinner takes a power of imagining, that it do.

L'lady. Ay, John.

L'lord. And after dinner, I'll go planting. And in the morning, wife, you'll see what you will see! Ah, you've got a clever husband.

L'lady. Nay, John.

L'lord. What?

L'lady. [*small voice*] Ay, John.

Enter BOOTS.

L'lord. Hullo, who be this? Why, 'tis never——

Boots. I, John.

L'lord. What do you mean by mimicking my wife, eh?

Boots. I didn't. It is I, John. You wouldn't expect me to say "it's me."

L'lady. Nay, John.

L'lord. Oh, well, if so be as it comes to that—I baint no scholard. What do you want, young feller.

Boots. What do you suppose?

L'lord. If you thinks I be going to start supposing when I'm half dead with imagining, you thinks wrong. And whatsoever you does want, you won't get. [*Aside to LANDLADY, as BOOTS peers about*] Where did I put yon stick, wife? Behind the door?

L'lady. Ay, John.

L'lord. He'll never find the cloth, but he might get that. I'd best be off and plant it, eh?

L'lady. Ay, John.

[*LANDLORD retires and takes up stick.*]

Boots [*suddenly*]. Lay on, elm-stick!

[*Whacks heard and outcry dying away.*]

Boots [looking out]. Ha, ha. Who ever saw twenty stone move so fast?

[LANDLADY falls on her knees with gestures.

Boots. Goodwile, your eloquence moves me. Say no more, my revenge—I mean my sense of justice—is satisfied. Stop, elm-stick!

L'lady. Ay, John, John!

[Exit LANDLADY, wringing hands, and re-enter carrying stick and leading LANDLORD, who sinks into chair.

Boots [taking stick]. Good staff, since you obey me, 'tis clear you're mine. [LANDLORD groans.] Well, John, what have you to say?

L'lord. [feebly] An Englishman don't know when he's beaten, don't he?

L'lady. Nay, John.

L'lord. [loud] You're wrong, he do. Open the clock! [Wife gapes.] Open the clock, can't you? If you'd not been a staring, good-for-nought Dutch doll, you'd have given it him sooner and saved my bones. [Grandly] Let the young feller have it.

Boots [taking cloth]. High time, too. Mother is starving, John. So is poor Pussy.

L'lord. Let him have it for charity!

Enter MOTHER with a basket.

Boots. Why, mother, there you are. [Basket opened.] And pussy, too. Why, we're all united.

Mother. Yes, Boots, I come along.

Boots [showing objects]. Do you believe me now?

Mother. My dear boy, in my heart of hearts
I never doubted you.

L'lord. [*gloomily*] 'Tis an ill wind that blows
nobody good.

Mother. Now, what shall we have—a song?

Boots. A dance?

L'lord. Or a dinner?

Boots. All three; come along.

[*They spread cloth C. and stand
round it. All think hard, and
consider what they like best in
the world. A pause.*]

Omnes. Sausages!

[*They join hands behind table to sing.*]

Tune—"The Leather Bottèl."

Boots.

Oh, now we'll gather the table round
Where all these eatables do abound;

Mother.

The sausages hissing, and toasted fair,
Enough for twenty and to spare;

L'lord.

And since as how we be only four,
For each on us present there's so much
more—

All.

So we'll eat it up merrily, don't you fear,
And here's to your health—[*they drink in
pairs*—and a Happy New Year!

Mother [*to L'lady*].

And think of the saving for busy wives,
We'll never lay tables again in our lives:

Boots.

And think of the save to a hungry son,
He never need wait till the cooking's done:

L'lord [beginning to eat].

And think of the waste not to eat while it's
hot

Boots [speaking against accompaniment].

Why, John, there's the chorus!

L'lord [getting up again]. Why, there, I forgot!

All.

And now we're just finishing, don't you fear,
And here's to your health—*[they drink to
audience]*—and a Happy New Year!

*[They dance round table to tune
played quickly through,
draw up in line, and bow.]*

[Curtain.]





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